The Commonweal

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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THE CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS

IT IS becoming daily more certain that any effort to swamp and obliterate the constitutional issue brought forward by the President, through the raising of a storm of popular fear that the ambition of a dictator and not the sense of duty of a statesman was the impelling motive of his action, is doomed to failure. The first furious outbreak of denunciations was like the similar abuse directed against the President during the election campaign, the effect of which was merely to increase the size of his majority of the votes. The employment of the same tactics now is far more likely to stir up great, and dangerously emotional, popular support for the President's proposals which if brought to bear upon the Congress would probably ensure their passage. And it would be a great misfortune for those proposals to be either adopted or defeated by means of emotional clamor or pressure politics rather than through ample and reasonable debate. Just as positively as it is true that many millions of American citizens resent attacks upon the Supreme Court which seem to them undignified, or intemperate, or subversive, so also are there many millions of American citizens—including great hosts of those who truly respect the Court—who equally resent and repudiate the bitter, hostile, unseemly and unjustifiable attacks upon the President which seek to stigmatize him as a would-be dictator, trying to overthrow the governmental system he has sworn to uphold. It is, therefore, all to the good that several of the most outspoken, and influential, opponents of the particular measures advanced by the President have recognized the truth that the problem of the Supreme Court is actual, and pressingly serious, and cannot be disposed of merely by defeating, in the Congress, the bill introduced by the President.

For example, Dorothy Thompson, who was conspicuously prominent in the chorus of denuncia-

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tion raised in the press by many commentators who compared the President's action to the steps taken by other dictators ranging from the late Huey Long (who packed the Louisiana courts to support his local, small-time dictatorship) to Mussolini, and Stalin, and Hitler, came forward later to assure the President that if he should "seek a clarifying amendment" to the Constitution, "thousands of us whose faces are against you in this moment will rally to your support."

More powerfully, because less violently, Mr. Walter Lippmann also took a leading part in denouncing the President's message, but in his later articles he has turned to the discussion of "the underlying constitutional crisis which has inspired the President's proposal." And that, we believe, is precisely what the situation requires. Mr. Lippmann expresses what is now a general conviction, shared, we think, by most Americans, irrespective of party affiliations, when he says that "there is no doubt whatever that the American constitutional system is in certain important respects seriously out of joint." After discussing the reasons for this conviction, Mr. Lippmann then proceeded to examine several of the leading proposals already laid before the country by Senator La Follette, and Senator Ashurst, and others, with which he disagrees, promising in a subsequent article to "suggest a different approach." Mr. Lippmann may or may not succeed in solving or tracing a way toward a solution of this fundamental problem; but anyhow he testifies to the fact that none but the most hidebound and stubborn champions of the status quo can deny the need of dealing with this central crisis of the nation. For it should not be forgotten that although in the presidential campaign Mr. Roosevelt was violently assailed as a subverter of the Constitution by the more vehement spokesmen for the Republican party, that party itself, and its presidential nominee, were pledged to seek a constitutional amendment, if such should seem necessary, to give the national government power to deal with economic problems, at least so far as child labor and minimum wages for women were concerned.

What the great majority of Americans, we believe, do firmly hold to be true, and justifiably so, is that the Supreme Court has been the instrument through which the civil liberties and rights of the people have been preserved and defended and perpetuated, and for that reason the Supreme Court is justly respected, and venerated, and now will be stoutly, even passionately, defended. On the other hand, there are vast numbers, probably a large majority, of the citizens, who think that the economic liberties and rights of the people have not been equally as well recognized, and defended, and promoted, by the Court. Because of the fixed adhesion of a controlling majority of the Supreme Court to property rights which had become unduly concentrated in the hands of a minority, the great majority of Americans were the helpless victims of an oppressive system which, apparently, could only be changed for the better through federal action—but such federal action has been almost constantly denied by the power of the Supreme Court.

In a time like this when many great nations have lost their civil as well as their economic liberties—and in such nations invariably the courts have been captured by the dictators and subjected to their control—it is absolutely necessary for Americans to preserve the independence of the judiciary and it is equally as necessary for them to see to it that the judiciary shall not become, or remain, the instrument of an oligarchical financial and industrial control over the destinies of the nation. This is the double nature of the problem presented by the constitutional crisis. The nation is being tested in the arena of a debate in which it is of supreme importance that reason and wisdom, and not passion and prejudice, should be invoked and employed.

Week by Week

The Trend of Events

VERY earnest consideration was given Mr. Roosevelt's suggestions anent the federal judiciary system. An almost bewildering number of politicians, authorities on constitutional law and journalistic commentators had their say. To date, two conclusions seem definitely established. First, the courts are not failing to perform the duties assigned to them, for reasons of physical infirmity or mental sluggishness. The facts indicate, on the contrary, that efficiency is and has been the rule. Second, there is no doubt that a majority of the federal justices do not see eye to eye with Mr. Roosevelt on matters of economic or political policy. Complaints that a too conservative interpretation of law and precedent has hampered the administration in carrying out the plainly expressed will of the people are hardly to be brushed aside, one thinks, with references to normal disagreements between two branches of the federal government. Personal sentiment has played an important part in several recent conflicts. The issue would therefore seem to be this: does the nation want the President empowered to create the kind of court with which he thinks he can work harmoniously, or does it want to restate fundamental law in such a way that the chief executive will be clearly empowered to act in a manner deemed necessary in view of social conditions? That is the only question that counts, Mr. Homer Cummings to the contrary notwithstanding. It is a very important, highly interesting problem. Fortunately the na-

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tion is not under any kind of pressure to consider it hastily. We are so far out from under the worst weather of a depression that there is no need for alarm or injudicious hurry.

The Catholic Struggle in Europe

READING the news from Spain, Germany and elsewhere indicates that Catholics are finding it harder and harder to safeguard the religious life from onslaughts by the dictators. The trouble is not merely ecclesiastical. That is, an autocrat may grant opportunities to priests and laymen inside the boundaries of church life without thereby satisfying deep moral needs of the Catholic citizen. More than a century of relatively democratic method has left behind at least a sense of co-responsibility for state offenses against the universal moral code. It is therefore not easy for the individual to find his way back into the spirit of ancient despotisms. Seeing that officials of the dominant party are guilty of brutal conduct, suppression of human rights, and an ideology favoring war for war's sake, he cannot resist at least a private condemnation of their actions. And if then the Church as a body keeps silence, lest scandal be given and prudence ignored, he feels embittered and even outraged. All this means eventually a broken man, who can serve neither God nor mammon with a whole heart and who therefore retires into a state of helplessness and self-disintegration. Sometimes he gradually manages to clarify his position, and to reconcile himself to the one thing necessary—a deeper spiritual clarification of himself, in order that society may be redeemed. But often he is lost, not in the sense of apostasy but in so far as his ability to make any real offering to the world in which he lives is concerned. It is against this background, so prodigal of suffering and even despair, that the American must read current news from Europe. Therein he will also find an explanation of why some countries, notably Spain, do not reveal any clear-cut Catholic unity. So many are being ground between millstones of violence that the only thing they can do is to seek refuge in what is adjudged the defense of some moral issue. But one such issue has this armed force behind it, and another that armed force. Chaos and bewilderment are the results.

One War Ended

WE BELIEVE the General Motors strike will be remembered for a long time as a test case of American life in 1937. Despite the magnitude of the battle-front and the numbers engaged, the list of serious clashes was extraordinarily small. By comparison a little South Chicago strike of twenty-five years ago was a bloody war. There were tense moments, of course, especially at Flint. But it was proved that soldiers are very effective keepers of the peace, when they are handled in the public welfare by officials devoted to being objective. When one remembers that Michigan was the scene of Black Legion activities only a few months ago, and that General Motors had a bona fide court order against the sit-downers, one is all the more astonished at the peace which prevailed. Unquestionably a large measure of the praise is due Governor Frank Murphy, who finally induced the C. I. O. to take recognition instead of sole recognition. But surely just as much respect has been earned by the executives of the company for realizing that a public-spirited policy is the only one having real long-range possibilities. It would have been most deplorable and socially perilous if the largest automotive industry had stood by any merely reactionary policy. We have all of us smiled in the past at certain foreigners who, contrasting the semi-military methods employed in European plants with the more cooperative spirit prevailing here, have grossly exaggerated actual progress in the United States toward what has been termed "industrial democracy." But in all truth there are voluntary contributions toward better relations which other countries do not match, at least generally. The trouble is that such actions have not been systematized into any kind of policy. It is not probable that they can be so systematized until a more efficient organization of labor has been effected. Let us hope that can be brought about with far less cost to the workers themselves than the present strike exacted.

Concerning Confucius

CHINA'S greatest wise man is once more in the news. Two rulings handed down by the Congregation of the Propaganda to determine Catholic attitudes toward certain Confucian practises are undoubtedly among the most interesting of the Church's decisions and have evoked widespread comment. The first applies to Manchukuo; the second, which is similar in character, is intended to render easier the progress of the Church in Japan. In essence both say that since the Mikado's government had defined the ceremonies honoring Confucius's birthday as purely non-religious and patriotic in character, the faithful may participate in them. That is, images may be set up before which the customary bows are permissible. Nothing that resembles a sacrifice offering may, however, be made. Thus comes to an end a debate in progress since the days of Saint Francis Xavier, though to be sure conditions have changed since then. Just now the feeling in Rome strongly supports the ancient Jesuit view that the ceremonies are a profession of loyalty to the State, and that the Christian missions cannot prosper if, for the sake of a possible adverse interpretation of some practises, converts are virtu-

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ally asked to disregard a civil law. The Japanese have introduced the ceremonies into Manchukuo in order to give the empire newly established there an aura of tradition and—perhaps—sacredness. Many journals hostile to the Papacy have, therefore, rushed to the conclusion that the rulings are based upon a political maneuver to some extent supported by the Italian government. But this view is without foundation, because the controversy was well on its way to a settlement before any such considerations could have presented themselves. We think that the sole point that can rightly be made by the political commentator is that Rome has once again indicated its readiness to respect every legitimate national or patriotic claim. A few years ago, the establishment of independent native clergies in the Orient was resolved upon. Today ancient patriotic customs are likewise sanctioned.

Protestant Public-School Children

WE VENTURE to think—and we are very glad to think—that the awakening in many Protestant Churches to the need of incorporating religious with general education, owes a great deal to Catholic thought and example. It cannot surely be otherwise; for while non-Catholic Christians have not always been alive to the deep problems occasioned by secular public-school education in this country, Catholics have almost from the first nerved themselves to define and to meet those problems. Hence, though it may be a coincidence in time that the Protestant Teachers' Association of New York City has met within a few months after the inspiring National Congress of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, the connection between the ideals animating the two meetings is, we think, demonstrable. The Catholic is the pioneer ideal; and it reflects equal credit on Catholics that this should be so, and on Protestants that they should respond to it so whole-heartedly. The latter group, though organized only seven years ago, already numbers 7,000 members pledged to further "through Bible instruction and in other ways after school hours, the moral and religious welfare of the children of the city." In addressing these teachers, Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick spoke words that must be deeply familiar to Catholics, regarding the organic connection between religious education and right living, civic and personal. He added certain statements regarding "release time" — those periods during which the public school by agreement dismisses certain bodies of students for religious instruction — which will have a more practical interest for those engaged on this problem. A certain proportion of the catechetical training now given Catholic children in attendance at public schools, is given during "release time." But for many reasons, the arrangement has had to be supplemented not only by vacation schools, which are almost universally desirable, but also by after-school, evening and week-end sessions. If the increase in Protestant awareness of the religious-education problem continues, it may be that the Protestant and Catholic groups, working together on the public-school authorities, will be able to effect a more widely satisfactory arrangement than either group has been able to achieve alone.

The Worst Monopoly

SENATOR WHEELER, chairman of the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee, announced plans to introduce a bill which would bar newspapers from owning radio broadcasting stations. It is to fight monopoly of the channels of public information. Already 150 radio stations are owned or controlled by newspapers, and more than 100 applications are pending for radio licenses from persons affiliated with papers. A politically or economically "rationalized" press eats out the integrity of a nation and rots its very conception of what truth should be. The most conspicuous examples of a unified press are, famously, in the great totalitarian nations, Russia, Italy and Germany—indeed, it is doubtful if there could be a totalitarian state with a free press. Mexico, for example, has a remarkably free press, and in Mexico the tyranny of the powers that be has never been as hatefully tight as in the European despotisms, and it has not succeeded in becoming static and hardened. It changes, as so conspicuously it is changing now, under the impact of public opinion. The freedom of expression is a major symptom of limitation in regimentation and a powerful cause working for limitation. Abroad, the current attitude of the whole Italian people on any public or private question reflects years of a Machiavellian control of public opinion. The standards by which all problems (e.g., the Ethiopian War) seem to be judged appear to those outside the range of the propaganda, fantastic, blindly fascistic, cruel, heedless of unchristian exploitation. And Russian opinion seems to be the most utterly debased of all. The bureaucracy tries to condition the masses like Pavlov did his dogs, and its success—limited as it may be, but reinforced as it is—is horrifyingly great. Our country has no Stalin nor Mussolini nor Goebbels and is so much the better off, but within the framework of untrammeled private enterprise can easily develop a prejudice and paucity of viewpoints which reduce the creativeness inherent in widespread responsibility for public information and opinion, and endangers truth. We welcome attacks on monopolies of the sources of thinking, and hope that Senator Wheeler will be successful enough in his present efforts to encourage a broader campaign.

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FOR AN AMENDMENT

By JOSEPH P. DONOVAN

Father Donovan believes that the Constitution should be amended "to become for the people of the United States in the twentieth century what it was for the people of the United States during a good part of the nineteenth century." This means giving the federal government the right to regulate industry and agriculture. We may add that this paper was written just before President Roosevelt suggested that Congress should alter the existing Supreme Court. It remains, however, a commentary on that suggestion.—The Editors.

ONE OF our distinguished historians, an understandingly zealous convert to the faith, not many weeks ago was asked in an open forum lecture if he thought the country in immediate danger of going Communist or Fascist. Immediate in the sense of a year or two, he declared there was no danger at all. Immediate in the sense of ten or fifteen years, he declared the danger really great. That very threatening danger he felt could be averted if the classes as opposed to the masses would begin to work forthwith for the riddance of our crying economic ills. He, like any sensible lover of his country, had no panacea or panaceas to offer for the cure of those ills which imperil our existence in the political, economic and religious orders. He would leave the discovery of the remedies and their application to common counsel. He would urge, however, a patriotic and a religious awakening to the need of quick action on the part of the people's leaders in every rank of life.

Group action is necessary, of course, and in the long run the most imperative action, if economic feudalism is going to be transformed in a controlled way into true economic democracy, if ownership of the common man is to replace the widespread serfdom of a mere wage régime. But, as the great Pontiff Pius XI points out in his encyclical, "Forty Years After," the State at the present day must take the initiative even in bringing about anything like group organization; for the world we live in is economically inorganic.

But in the United States civil legislation will remain essentially inadequate until the Constitution is brought down to date. Here is where the old fogies will interrupt with the cries: "Hands off!" "Don't touch the integrity of that sacred document!" "The Constitution has given us our liberties and without it those liberties will perish!" But the fogies are too out of touch with actualities to realize that they are just repeating the shibboleths put in their mouths by the shrewd lawyers of our big business racketeers, who, thief-like, are distracting the attention of the public from the vital issues by shouting to save an organic law which they themselves have about destroyed in as far as that organic law enables our two coordinate jurisdictions, the states and the federal government, to deal adequately with the truly important problems of contemporary concern. The returned hunter from the Catskills after twenty years of sleep could not recognize his own surroundings, so changed had they become by the intervening Revolutionary War and the setting up of the American Republic. So an aroused spirit of the Constitution after at least fifty years of profound slumber will not be able to discover much more than a verbal resemblance between the immortal document which left the hands of the illustrious members of the Convention of 1787 and the present Constitution consisting of the original text plus the amendments expanded by right interpretations bringing out the implicit meaning and legislatively added to by judicial decisions, and made obsolescent by fundamental principles unapplied to new conditions. Madison, Hamilton, Pinckney, come to life again, would stand aghast at beholding what they made a palladium of liberty turned into an instrument of oppression for the ordinary man and elevated to a ukase of privilege for inhumane corporations.

I am not advocating constitutional revolution. Rather I am pleading for a constitutional restoration. I am only asking that through the simple process of an amendment, with exemplary declarations if necessary, the Constitution become for the people of the United States in the twentieth century what it was for the people of the United States during a good part of the nineteenth century. I do not demand that the judiciary be shorn of its power to pass upon the constitutionality of statutory law. For while that power has entailed much judge-made law, yet such an accidental consequence has not been purely an unmixed evil. In very many instances those extensive interpretations supplied the neglect of a Constitutional Convention to act from time to time by way of adding new grants to the original legislative charter of Congress. The Supreme Court in its entire history has been guilty of only about three flagrantly ignorant decisions, the Fugitive Slave, the Income Tax and the Minimum Wage law reversals. Unfortunately Catholics figured ignominously in two of those ignorant decisions. In one a Catholic Chief Justice so far forgot his Christian principles as to declare by

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implication that a human creature can be just a chattel. In the other an Associate Justice was so unmindful of the philosophy of law as to be the fifth in a five-four decision which declared in effect that secondary frauds can be guarded against by state or federal statutes without impairing the freedom of contract, but not a primary fraud, such as offering less than a living wage. That Catholic Justice seemingly had never heard of Pope Leo construing on this point the law of nature itself, when that social-minded Pontiff wrote in his encyclical, "On the Condition of Labor," this imperishable pronouncement:

> Let it be granted, then, that, as a rule, workman and employer should make free agreements, and in particular should freely agree as to wages; nevertheless, there is a dictate of nature more imperious and more ancient than any bargain between man and man, that the remuneration must be enough to support the wage-earner in reasonable and frugal comfort. If through necessity or fear of worse evil, the workman accepts harder conditions because an employer or a contractor will give him no better, he is the victim of force and injustice.

No; he who knows anything about the philosophy of law is desirous of no radical or revolutionary change in the Constitution. For he is aware that social like organic bodies have their own laws of life. By these laws those bodies grow, they flourish and, if purely human, in their own good time they decay. In accordance with these laws vitality can be increased or restored; in defiance of them the best that can be obtained is a crippled existence. Every intelligent lover of his country, then, wants to see the Constitution kept in principle. That principle antedates the Constitution itself in its written form; it was the vivifying element of the unwritten or Providential Constitution. That principle has its negative no less than its positive phase. Negatively, it is that there are rights anterior to civil law and above civil law and that even within the domain of civil law, enactments are not to proceed from legislators unless useful or necessary, and in that event they promote rather than restrain liberty. Positively, that constitutional principle is that the local jurisdiction is to deal with the local affair, provided that the same local jurisdiction is able to regulate the said local affair satisfactorily. If not, then the general jurisdiction will have to intervene perforce.

This latter thing the Fathers of the Constitution did in four affairs, which by their nature are local but which by their circumstances were then and still are virtually general. I refer to bankruptcy, naturalization, copyrights and patent rights. These the Fathers took out from under the authority of the several states, where if their formal nature alone were considered they strictly belong, and placed them either under the exclusive or at least the dominating control of the federal government. The Fathers of the Constitution, unlike their French imitators of a few years afterward, were not idle theorists. They were men of high practicality. They were not looking for jurisprudential symmetry. They were seeking a fundamental law that would fit conditions. They weren't squeezing affairs to get them into pet jurisdictions; they were rather stretching jurisdictions to cover affairs as those affairs were found in the life of their own day. When and if affairs would change, these men of wisdom provided a remedy to meet the change; they laid down provisions for calling into ordinary or extraordinary session the Constitutional Convention. Each generation, not once but as often as desired, could add germane amendments to the Constitution by the relatively easy method of a vote by two-thirds of both Houses of Congress ratified by three-fourths of the states. In fact, the very first Congress with the necessary number of states concurring added a round half of all the amendments thus far adopted.

The working principle is there. It needs only application, and application to a concern that touches the life and fortunes of almost every family of the country. I mean industry including agriculture must by an amendment be brought under the power of the federal government to regulate fully. We must energetically promote this or sit idly by waiting for the long-suffering masses to be driven into revolt. The rise of the Robber Barons that Josephson places between 1864 and 1904 recalls the fact that an economic reconstruction was not so much as thought of after the close of the Civil War. Government abdicated a very important function of high sovereignty when it allowed, on the one hand, men to build up giant monopolies by ruthlessly destroying competitors through the zoning system and thereupon imposing higher prices on the public after the manner of oriental war lords plundering a city under the euphemism of an imposed tax or fine. Or, on the other hand, government permitted in 1904 one of the great steel corporations to buy out its big competitor and thereafter push up prices. That competitor had boasted he could undersell the world with $24 a ton steel and for all that make a wee bit of profit. The new combine at once jumped the price of steel to $28 a ton and kept it there for the next twenty years. Yet underworld racketeers are called public enemies, whereas colossal extortioners are able to have themselves glorified as captains of industry and lords of high finance.

The four-volume historical study of economics lately brought out under the auspices of the Brookings Institution ascertains that productive efficiency between the years 1920-1930 increased 25 percent; nevertheless, the consuming public profited not at all by this improvement in tech-

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nique. Monopolies, formal or virtual, gobbled these savings in the cost of production. The study shows 40 percent of the nation's families receiving in 1929 a yearly income of less than $1,500; likewise that there was in that same year an excess of about $10,000,000,000 savings by reason of excess profit; and most astounding, that a living family wage would have called forth something like 20 percent more production in consumers' goods and that facts now proclaim with a right adjustment of the present economic set-up a minimum family wage of at least $2,000 a year could be paid. The experts making this study avow that the American farmer between 1900-1930 did not get a fair share of the total income. To bear out that assertion along comes a recent book stating that the farmer of Denmark gets about 65 percent of the retail price of his products while the American farmer gets only 31 percent. Again, we have Belloc some years ago contending in a series of articles in the *American Review* that retail chain stores are a social menace because they de-class the countryside through driving out independent owners and reducing all income receivers to the categories of cheaply paid clerks and mere straw managers and that these chain stores should be kept from getting near the monopolistic stage by a progressive tax. Iowa tried that expedient and had its law declared unconstitutional.

The political tyranny of George III was a mild sufferance compared with the economic tyranny that the country now labors under with 200 corporations owning over 50 percent of the wealth and with 2,000 directors, mostly non-owners, controlling this immense wealth. Sweden two decades ago was under a like economic dictatorship. But the Swedes had intelligence and aggressiveness enough to beat down their plutocratic masters. The Swedes used as means of liberating themselves group organization, the nationalization of a few industries or utilities, the encouraging of cooperation in all its forms and having the economic groups draw up political alignments. That sturdy people appear to have actually effected what Belloc, Chesterton and others in England were considered the poets of economics for advocating. Yes; they would seem to have brought about a democracy of ownership, scientifically called Distributism. We have in this country men of agrarian, distributist and homestead principles; and they are trying to link up with the laboring and consuming classes in order to bring back the traditional American economic régime of widespread ownership, of the ownership of property with the inseparable control of that same property. Their principles are sound because these principles have been tested through the ages; but these men must first bring the Constitution down to date, or else they can never get any of these reforms into action.

The NRA and AAA were honest attempts (good in aim but really unprogressive in method) to get some kind of social justice under the present application of the constitutional principle. Those enactments, however, were quite properly declared beyond the present grant of power to Congress. The attempt was worth the while nevertheless. It proved by demonstration that either industry must go unregulated, and with it the country drift on to economic chaos, or that the regulation can come only under a long overdue amendment to the Constitution. A minimum wage, humane working conditions, family allowances, the prohibition of child labor and similar safeguards to life and morals will be incidental to this regulatory power. The amendment must be the preliminary step to any long-range or short-range program of reform or, better, of economic restoration. And such an amendment is made possible by the overwhelming victory of the President and his party in the November elections. Let our beloved leader, therefore, gird himself for the accomplishment of this task first. Then let him labor for one feasible reform after another through statutory encouragements and statutory mandates. In that event history will give the New Deal a significance beyond anything its author even wistfully hoped it could have.

The Basket

My slender son, who looks like me,
Has often heard me tell how he
Came in a basket his first year
Across three thousand miles of sea.

He has hunted till he found
The basket, and he takes it round
With the treasures he loves best,
And sits inside it on the ground.

And when he is inside the thing,
The boy's face lights up like the wing
Of a seagull over dawn,
And then he may let go and sing.

Perhaps he makes it seem a boat,
And he is far away, afloat,
Crossing the ocean that he crossed,
And happiness fills up his throat.

Yet there is something deeper there
Than playing boat, the boy lays bare,
For an instant, something brighter
Than the splendor of his hair.

I wish I had a house so right,
So when trouble came, I might
Get into it and fill my eyes
With such everlasting light.

ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN.

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IN HALFWAY COVE

By KENNETH LESLIE

IT IS within comparatively recent memory that University Extension and its stepbrother Adult Education spread from America to Europe and back again to spill out of our colleges onto the surrounding area some of their cultural and practical benefits. Traveling libraries, visiting lecturers, and correspondence courses on every subject from Plato to planting peas are now routine matters in our institutions of higher learning. Columbia University offers literally hundreds of such courses including one in personal adornment. Ohio State University spreads her culture by means of radio. Antioch places her students part-time in actual positions in the industrial world, a kind of inverted extension, seeking modestly to study the world rather than to tell the world.

The desire of colleges to be useful to industry would be wholly admirable were it not for the unlaid ghost coming down from the dark ages of Benthamite liberalism, the illusion that technological improvement entails human improvement. All of these extension activities, whether seriously serving technique or reducing the price of culture to the crowd, are of the nature of uncritical purposes. The main directions of the world are taken for granted. Those who control and benefit from the fundamental structure of society have pretty well all been to college and consider it a function of that structure. Curricula may not include courses which would tend to negate or destroy the very society which makes the college possible.

Even in the midst of the horrors of the industrial revolution the liberal faith in the machine plus "come-what-may" economy was equal to the hatred of the machine by the workers who were lashed to it. This mechanolatry cowed England for a century, was expressed in the sad utopian dreams of H. G. Wells, in the popular myth of Hoover, the engineer, in the shelving of metaphysics to make room for the thousand and one positive sciences in colleges which had been founded to teach little else than metaphysics. "Science" has not only become the password to popular credulity. It is the red herring across the path of higher education.

If I should say that education which leaves out religion is no education at all at least half my readers would raise their eyebrows. It is safe to say that few average Americans share the recently expressed concern of the Catholic clergy lest secular education become a monopoly. Some who might otherwise share that concern are asking the religious schools and colleges to show their title to all the expense and special consideration they entail.

Many might ask, and some are asking: where on this continent is one such institution which is honestly integrating its efforts with the life-and-death struggle of its constituency? Is there one?

Many theological colleges and ecclesiastically controlled colleges and colleges with a religious tradition greet each day with a chapel service in which the prayer recurs, "Thy kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven!" and later in the classroom the manifest impossibility of such a consummation is stressed.

The closest approximation to the realization of this prayer was the medieval world and its Latin culture which took account of and balanced national and individual differences within some sort of Christocentric matrix—a matrix not sufficiently strong however to hold when the glands and muscles and minds of men stretched themselves to bursting in the successive discoveries of the old world of Greece, the new world of America, the scientific method, and the machine. The balance was destroyed. The counter-weight of value for human action instead of being the steady and organic counter-weight of the unknowable Shaper became the constantly changing zigzagging humanly defined standard, and since the Middle Ages (which perhaps should be called the First Great Age) each of these standards has been canvassed in turn and has looped upon itself in frustration and has been cast aside for something new. The latest humanist standard of weights and measures is the concept of social justice. In this as in every other humanistic concept lies the unacknowledged organic sap and strength of the "bowel of mercy" through which man learns that his umbilical cord is tied to the universal source of all lives, through which man learns that his finite soul is not finite.

If we could stumble upon a man or a group of men who, acknowledging the source of their desire for social justice and reshaping that concept in the more positive and fitting terms of voluntary cooperation, actually go out and lead their fellows into that kind of economic life, we should be stumbling upon a synthesis that is long overdue in the world.

Such a group of men is at work. In Antigonish, in Eastern Nova Scotia, the University of St. Francis Xavier, Roman Catholic, small, serving a population of Hebridean Gaels and Acadian French, is pushing vigorously among these people who are mostly farmers and fishermen a campaign of adult education through and by and in economic cooperation, or, to put it more significantly, a cam-

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paign of economic cooperation as a measure of adult education. The university acts through its Extension Department. So that we have these two modern instruments being used by a very ancient institution to build in this undiscovered corner of the world a typical civilization which may lead the way to the establishment of a Second Great Age on less shakable foundations. If you should go to Antigonish and say that all you see there is some more study clubs and some more efforts at cooperation you would be stating facts and missing the truth. The truth is far greater and deeper than appears on the surface. Otherwise such men as E. R. Bowen, general secretary of the Cooperative League of America, Murray D. Lincoln, secretary of the Farm Bureau Federation of Ohio, would not find it worth their while to travel down there in order to study the organization methods of these priests and professors.

An idea of the work of this group may be gained from Malcolm MacLellan's book, "The Catholic Church and Adult Education," published by the Catholic University of America in Washington and from the speeches and writings of the leaders of the group itself: J. J. Tompkins (whom Dr. Coady calls the "daddy of us all"), Coady himself (a giant in mind, soul and body), A. B. MacDonald, Dr. Hugh MacPherson (agriculturist, geologist, Celticist), notably from the speech delivered by Dr. M. M. Coady before the Rural Life Conference at St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1934, a speech which profoundly affected that body. You will of course judge best of all by first-hand contact with the movement. That is, provided your evaluations are habitually qualitative. If you can be impressed only by $1,000,000 turnovers and hotel house-parties and beflagged mass meetings you will be disappointed. The work goes on as quietly as possible and as unostentatiously as possible, avoiding inflated talk and premature chicken-counting, eschewing human loud-speakers and all the paraphernalia that seems to belong to up-to-the-minute political power marches.

The operation is simple and extremely effective. A leader goes into a village and, either alone or with the assistance of the local priest, gathers a public meeting. The purpose of this is to sift the community and to organize from its interested elements a study club. This may be very small at first. Quality is more important than quantity. If things go well you can always count on the crowd to join in. So far so good. And quite harmless you will say. But what do they study? Four things. How to buy together. How to sell together. How to make things together. How to finance together. And how do they study? By the laboratory method of trying to learn how to do these things right there in the village or town in which they live. For instance, in the village of Havre au Bouche thirty-five lobster fishermen by processing and selling their lobsters cooperatively made in one year $7,000 more than they would have made by individual marketing. Even as money this amount is not to be sneezed at, and it meant more than just money to these men. The parish priest of this village, James Boyle, who is also on the Extension Staff of the university, tells of the enlargement of interest of these people as they follow their goods to market imaginatively. He compares their present pride and interest in their product and its destination with the listlessness of former days when they dumped their product down at the foot of the speculator behind whom hung the impenetrable veil of the mystery of selling. Father Boyle will tell you the important thing is not the few dollars gained by this cooperative effort but the unveiling of this mystery, the growth of the mind, the development of character. And that is the ultimate purpose of this study and of the activities into which this study plunges these people. Which is why I say that this movement is not just another example of cooperation. It is more, much more; it includes cooperation as a means to education which is a means to the growth of the soul. The Xaverian movement is a religious movement. As Dr. Coady has said, "The economic question looms so big today that one might say it is the great social, political and even religious question of the hour."

Of these study clubs there are over 1,000 functioning under leaders who are mostly young farmers, fishermen and miners. They are in close touch with the Extension Department. The Extension Bulletin comes to them every two weeks keeping them in contact with the world of vital thought and action and with each other. The leaders take six-week courses in the university and refreshers from time to time. Work is being done in the public schools to develop leaders. Once a year a convention is held at the university where reports are presented from each study group and cooperative enterprise. Here the men of the sea and soil speak quietly and to the point, a play may be presented, a Gaelic chorus may break out spontaneously; but it is no oratorical contest and there is no rah-rah business. The Highland dirk of satire is ever ready to flash at the slightest hint of anyone getting above himself or beyond himself. Not that they fail to respond to genuine emotion. But they will not be coerced in their affection nor intimidated in their respect. One of the remarkable features of these conventions as of all the work is the comradeship between Catholics and Protestants. Of course there are Presbyterians in other parts of the province who suggest that the whole thing is just a belated attempt of Saint Peter to mend his net. Such suggestions are not in order in places where the study clubs operate. As a matter of fact, the leaders at Antigonish are frequently embarrassed by requests for guidance

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from groups who live under the shadow of the other universities, Acadia and Dalhousie.

The study clubs are blossoming and bearing fruit in buying clubs and cooperative stores of which there are upward of fifty, in credit unions of which there are forty, in cooperative boat building, in fishermen's unions and in the cooperative selling as well as processing and canning of fish and fruit, in weaving clubs among the women, in the pooling of domestic and agricultural information, in a rage for books and information bearing on the thousand and one problems which daily confront those who begin to build a new civilization. They cannot get nearly enough books and it is in this regard that the university is most severely handicapped. The whole thesis and assumption underlying this project is that democracy must extend from the political to the economic field to amount to anything and that democracy depends on education, is education. Education walks on two feet: one, first-hand experience, the other, shared experience. Books are shared experience. Not old books. New books hot off the press. Everything is grist to their mill, books on Sweden, Denmark, Finland, books on the latest developments in the British Consumers' Cooperatives, on the rapidly spreading cooperative movement in the Middle Western United States, books on the Soviet Union. With the exception of such classics in the history of this movement as the prophecy of Amos or the Epistle of Saint James in the Bible or "The National Being," by George Russell, books are hardly printed before they begin to date owing to the rapidity of change in the modern scene. The books available are on the go all the time from study club to study club in boxes of twenty-five or thirty, but the supply is miles behind the demand and this is a splendid opportunity for investment on the part of some foundation.

The people of Eastern Nova Scotia (which includes one of the world's beauty spots, Cape Breton Island) are poor. They are not barbarous. They speak the language of Saint Columba. I suppose even in Ireland there is no university where the ancient tongue is so unself-consciously and completely at home as at St. Francis Xavier. Typical is the rector, Hugh P. MacPherson, a gifted scholar whose wit plays easily in several languages but most sharply in the Gaelic. To sit with these men at table in their refectory is to experience the continuity of culture, to feel the breath of a great and free past in the living present. Rome is there, but not imperialism. Rather the Rome of Paul in prison. Aristotle is there and his Christian disciple of Aquin. All the tumultuous poetry and pride and mystery of Gaelic literature are there. The spontaneity, the simplicity, the grace of Christ are there in those giant genial bodies. A story concerning the poet Bishop Alexander MacDonald will best illustrate the distinction of these men. On leaving a certain city in the West the chief of an heretical sect came to Bishop MacDonald and asked for his blessing. MacDonald said, "Yes, but first you shall give me your blessing!" And the Roman bishop knelt.

A few years ago this people were, to say the least, dispirited. It is not necessary to go into the causes of their discouragement. They were world causes complicated by special local difficulties. Battling the sea in scattered villages storm-blown over a ragged coast, isolated in an economic illiteracy and helplessness aggravated by the plight of the primary producer in a country which protects industry at his expense, these descendants of crofters, whose runrigs and straths had been stolen from them, and their Acadian brothers were on the point of surrendering their Nova Scotian hills to the culture of Christmas trees and their children to the shoe factories of the "Boston-States." The faces of these people have been changed from something very like despair to hope and to more than hope. It cannot be too often said (for Mr. Gradgrind will demand his facts and figures) that the news of Nova Scotia cannot be written in tangible terms. The news is that a community of a little less than 200,000 souls in a certain piece of land that flies like a ribbon from the face of this continent is changed. Wherever you may go in that community today you will find a conviction of destiny which bears a close analogy to the conviction of destiny of the Russian Communist, a feeling that they are on the way to discovering the economic way of life which is part and parcel of *the* way of life. Nature must still be wrestled with but at least man shall not stand against man. Men shall stand together and work together and if need be starve together. But the Big House must go. And the Big Man. And the head of the table shall be the place of the hungriest child.

There is none of the perfectionism here of the early Utopians, none of the exaggerated expectations usually associated with such efforts. It is of no use for enemies and critics of this movement to stand around and wait gleefully for failure. Failures are expected and discounted in advance. Dr. Coady says, "If you fail don't cry about it. Find out why you failed and get up on your feet and start again." So the critics' exclamations of joy at the collapse of this or that undertaking will be drowned in the stir of renewed activity and the laying of deeper foundations for a better one.

"Thy kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven," is the prayer of the priests of Antigonish: to Halfway Cove, Arisaig, Inverness, Lochaber, Port Felix, to every tiny fishing village lost behind a headland, to every strath and glen folded away among Cape Breton hills. Credit unions, study clubs, cooperative stores, and flaming zeal of faith in human nature are helping to build that kingdom.

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IT COSTS TOO MUCH

By CLEM LANE

THE CLERGY in recent issues of the Catholic periodicals have been showing concern and puzzlement over the problem of leakage in the Church in the United States. There is no mystery as to the cause of leakage. It's simply this: It costs too much to be a Catholic.

With the bright-eyed inquisitiveness customary to newspaper men, I have asked many a whilom Catholic why he had left the fold. The reasons offered are legion but analysis indicates that in nearly every instance the underlying cause is economic—it costs too much to be a Catholic.

Refusal to accept the Church's teachings on birth has sent more American Catholics out of the Church than any other reason, I am told by my clerical friends. And almost always, the objection to rearing a family has its roots in dollars and cents.

As the father of five children, I have given some thought to the costs of rearing a Catholic family. Our children came into the world in eleven years. The cost of delivery ranged from $50 to $100 each. Pre-natal and hospital care cost another $100 to $200 for each case. The modern physician is too busy to bother with infant feeding formulas or infant ills, so the baby of today must be cared for by a pediatrician. He is rated as a specialist and so his fees are higher than the general practitioner. Where the childless couple can live in a few rooms, parents of a sizable family must have a house or a big apartment. And the mother of such a family must have household help.

It may be argued that parents of five children, regardless of religion, face the same costs. Without entering into a discussion on the size of urban families, Catholic or otherwise, such a statement is true only to the time that the children arrive at school age. The tuition in the Catholic grade school is little enough—$1 or $2 a month. But to this must be added the cost of books and the decided number of extras. The expense is not apparent when there is but one child in the grade school, but as the others follow there is a noticeable dent in the family purse in early September after the Catholic mother confers with the nuns.

The school cost to Catholic parents rises sharply when their children reach high school age. Tuition charges for Catholic girls' high schools in Chicago range from $60 to $100 a year. Boys' high schools cost more—$100 to $175 a year. And again we have the added burdens of books and extras. Beyond lies the Catholic college and a further strain on the family finances.

Catholic parents who send their children to public school escape these costs. There is the selfish parent who won't make the financial sacrifice, or the deluded parent who thinks the public school more advanced, or the snobbish parent who hopes that the public school will offer his children better "contacts." No pity need be wasted on these. But what about those parents who, having heeded the Church's teachings, often find themselves unable to afford the cost of a Catholic education for their children because of the very size of their families?

Catholic parents do send their children to public schools for no other reason than one of cost. That is evident from the 1935-1936 report of the Reverend Daniel F. Cunningham, superintendent of schools for the Chicago archdiocese. There are 163,726 children in our Catholic grade schools in the archdiocese. The general Catholic population of metropolitan Chicago indicates that at least that many of our Catholic children are in public schools.

Of course, one can label such a statement as a guess. But there is no guessing about the figures in Father Cunningham's report on where the children go when they leave grade school. Last June, 8,798 boys were graduated from Catholic grade schools. Of these, the report shows, 2,841 went into Catholic high schools and 5,199 went into public high schools. And the girls: 9,300 graduates; 3,747 into Catholic high schools, 4,584 into public high schools. Here are children whose parents sent them to Catholic grade school, but did not send them to Catholic high school. Surely there can be but one answer—it cost too much.

It takes an exceptional child of exceptional Catholic parents to weather a public school education with his faith unharmed. I am certain that if our pastors of statistical mind would inquire into the schooling of Catholics who have contracted invalid or mixed marriages, they would find that our failure to keep our children in Catholic schools has much to do with another major factor in the leakage.

If the Church is losing members because it costs too much to be a Catholic, the only way to stop such leakage is to make it cost less to be a Catholic. Prosperous times always show an increase in births and marriages. In other words, persons not married can afford to marry and persons already married can afford to have children. It's a question of cost—can we afford it?

Take the economics of delivering a squalling infant into the world. In Chicago, the Catholic

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mother and father of limited means can afford to have a baby because it costs less. Cardinal Mundelein, through the aid of a generous layman, established the Lewis Memorial Hospital some five years ago. Pre-natal care, the delivery of the baby and hospitalization for the mother costs $50, payable in instalments. The by-products of Cardinal Mundelein's action were interesting to observe. Catholic physicians were aggrieved and the heads of Catholic hospitals shook their heads dolefully. But the cost of having a baby decreased in Chicago. Physicians decided they could preside at a normal birth without having the father mortgage the family jewels. Hospital boards, Catholic and otherwise, found that it was practical to offer a flat rate for the confinement period and some hospitals even went so far as to approximate the Lewis Memorial Hospital cost for the service.

There may be similar movements in other sees. I hope so. Is it effective? More than 10,000 babies have been born in Lewis Memorial Hospital, and the annual report of Father Cunningham shows that in September, 1935, for the first time in years, there was an increased enrolment in the first grade of our parochial schools.

There's still the question of school costs. The expense in grade school is so low that most Catholics can meet it. Where they can't, the parish and its various organizations should lend the parent a hand. This is done in most parishes with which I am familiar, but many pastors do not advertise the fact. If the pastors did, and went bare-fisted after the parents whose children were not in the Catholic school, I believe our enrolment figures would show surprising increase. The secondary schools and the colleges are the real cost problem. The Church, through the self-sacrifice of its religious and priests, has gone far to meet the problem, but in this day and age the Church must go farther. The cost competition offered by the tax-supported high school, city college or state university, is too much.

One of two things must be done if we are to save the majority of our Catholic children for the Catholic high schools. Either state aid must be forthcoming for our schools or the burden now borne by Catholic parents willing to have children must be shared by all Catholics.

So far as the former is concerned, there are straws in the wind: The student aid offered by the National Youth Administration, the textbook ruling in Louisiana, the vigorous movement for state aid in Ohio and favorable rulings on school buses in other states. But it seems unlikely that this generation or the next will see our Catholic schools receiving their proportionate share of taxes. Further, there is fear in some quarters that state aid might mean state control, so that our Catholics are not in general agreement as to its desirability.

The parish high school is becoming a rarity. The Catholic high school of today is being built, often without any diocesan aid, by the courageous nuns, Brothers and priests. And many of them tell me they must look to the parents of the children they are teaching, not only for the funds for the maintenance of the school and its teachers but for the money to retire the building's debt.

God has been good in a material way to the Church in this country. Our churches, our parish buildings, our schools and our seminaries have kept pace with America. For the most part we have weathered the depression and once again buildings are being reared that will be surmounted by the cross. But to what avail? It is as if we were a nation that had built the mightiest of fortresses, the greatest of battle fleets, only to find that we have but a handful of soldiers and sailors to man them. Catholic leakage is in the high school. If the problem of Catholic secondary education remains the problem of the Catholic parent alone, and not the problem of all Catholics, then it will continue to cost too much to be a Catholic and the leakage will continue.

Lonely for Cattle

Sometimes I become acutely lonely for cattle;
In the night, past the city sounds, I can hear them sighing
Under the chestnuts, in the wood-pasture on the hilltop—
Always in summer starlight they slept there, lying
Huddled and indistinct, with the deep moist fragrance
Of grassy earth and their great hot bodies breaking
The silence with less than sound, yet more than rapture—
A silence louder than bells that marked their waking.

These are the rhythms of cattle: the small soft friction
Of long rough tongues on rocksalt, over and over;
The bursting of bubbles above the trough in the morning,
The creak of stanchions, the frozen whisper of clover
High in the winter mow—and the desperate music
Of warm breath touching frost, with the east red-glowing.
The rhythms of cattle are sounds that snap and rustle:
Fodder and ice, the rattle of pails, and lowing.

These I shall keep of cattle, out of the night and memory—
A damp calf in a boxstall, the mother's brown eyes rolling;
A sputtering lantern, the odor of wick and coal-oil. . . .
Yes, I am lonely for cattle—lonely beyond consoling—
Yet surely there must be cattle, this hour, this moment, chewing
Their cuds in the starlight somewhere, melting the frost with their breath;
Summer and winter they haunt me, above the sounds of the city,
Persistently as life, irrevocably as death.

MINNIE HITE MOODY

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THE COMMUNIST

By M. J. HILLENBRAND

HARDLY a Catholic periodical appears nowadays without at least one vituperative denunciation of Communism, and yet few denouncers seem to know precisely what they are denouncing. The method is something like this: get a few quotations from Marx, from Lenin; brand them as epitomes of the Communist creed; assume that all Communists subscribe to all the quotations and are therefore horrifiers, devils personified.

I have often suspected that many of our lecturers and writers have been reading too much about Communism and seeing too few Communists. It is understandable that Catholics should attack the enemy as a coherent whole, for they see the infallible Church with its constant dogmas, divinely guarded—and by some mental quirk imagine that Communist doctrine is also infallibly immutable. But while such misconception may excuse, it provides poor consolation for our use of a technique that creates many wrong impressions and obtains few good results.

Of course the question is one of purpose: do we want to convince Communists and potential Communists, or simply keep Catholics? We are not actually doing either, for the Catholics reached—the study-club and periodical-reading type—do not need keeping. A tremendous amount of time, energy and verbiage goes to waste, which might be turned into more profitable positive channels; and the Communists continue to enroll new members.

All that we succeed in doing is antagonizing those drifting neutrals and waverers seeking some stability in social theory and practise; those workers who will grab at anything that promises a decent way of life; and particularly those young intellectuals who will provide future Communist leaders, but are not yet violently hostile to the Church in any European sense.

With this last group I am chiefly concerned here; some rather intimate contacts and all-night bouts of argument have at least brought me to appreciate its attitude if not to sympathize with its cause. I have become painfully aware of an awkward polemical position, against which is constantly thrown the example of our professional denunciators, who throw verbal bombshells against dastardly Communism and from cloudy heights fling about quotations from the encyclicals —without ever getting down into the streets and actually doing something about applying them. The old misconception of the Church as reactionary is not only not dissolving, but adding the picture of her members as platitudinously windy and inert.

Among these young Communists, few realize the implications of their creed. Primarily emotional, their movement seeks a vague goal of social justice, a change in the industrial order which has brought so much suffering and insecurity. There is tremendous pity, and not nearly enough hate in the collegiate Communist to justify any theory of diabolical inspiration and our emphasis on unqualified condemnation. Perhaps the best way to bring out his various attitudes and ideals is to characterize typical individuals briefly.

Dave had been thrown out of New York City College for agitating, and had hitch-hiked to a large Midwestern state university where he immediately became a leader among the young Communist group—though he had remained always somewhat of a free-lance. A born orator and wit, he dominates open forum discussions, confusing pompous lecturers, and winning audience-sympathy.

Why is he a Communist? Because he sincerely believes the only way to keep men from starving is to nationalize food distribution, the only way to keep men employed is to nationalize industrial production, the only way to keep the world at peace is to eliminate the economic causes of conflict rising from capitalistic imperialism. If he is un-Christian, his college training, not his Communism, made him that. Professors had killed early beliefs; Marx had given him a new faith, which while faulty in technique and goal is thoroughly unselfish in animus — certainly better than the drab, hedonistic materialism of the schools.

He knows very little about the intellectual claims of Catholicism as a religion, but his mental filing-system of reactionary Catholic statements is rather amazing. It is generally surprising how these students discover every violent denunciation of them, confirming their opinion of the Church's hatred of reform, absolute stand-pattism—even clip out the press report, lurified in a Hearst journal, and shove it in your face during an argument when you are impotently trying to explain that Catholics don't precisely approve of exploiting capitalism either. Words speak louder than action in this case where, with few exceptions, there is so little action.

Dave knows his Karl Marx but, contrary to the assumption of the "pick-your-quotation" school of criticism, does not hold that every sentence by the nineteenth-century high priest must be accepted

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as absolute dogma. He readily admits that many concepts of "Das Kapital" don't hold water today; and when I proposed the basic contradiction in Communist ideology—so stressed by Berdyaev—between the determinism and dialectical materialism and that voluntarism implied in stress on social action and revolution, he admitted never having thought of it in that way. In squirming out of the dilemma, he virtually conceded the autonomy of man in determining the destiny of his race, leaving economic forces as only one influencing factor on conduct.

This repudiation of strict determinism, if only implicit, will be found in most American Communists—which must be rather surprising to those who think all Marxists hold themselves mere motiveless clods flung through life by a concatenation of economic and physical causes. Even at Moscow itself, the problem provided the core of issue in a famous philosophic duel of a few years back.

Of course Soviet Russia serves as a tangible ideal, but Dave's acceptance of propagandizing books and articles is no more unrealistic than the absorption of the same stuff by many of our liberal intellectuals. All in all, a very practical young man, devoting his splendid talents to a very idealistic ideal and being periodically amused, at times angered, by apoplectic attacks against the menace to society and country that he and his ilk constitute. While not precisely the flag-waving type, Dave prefers America—though a reformed America—and smiles at remarks that he and his whole bunch ought to be shipped over to Russia and see how they like it.

Sam is one of those keenly brilliant young Jews who seem to be destined for agitation and pamphleteering. Feeling acutely, almost physically, the sufferings of the poorer classes, he is still something of the intellectual dilettante in his flashy criticisms, his ironic evaluations. But no mere poseur, he marches in parades waving a banner as well as he writes satirical poems, with the Fascist student organization on the local campus providing a broad target for his lampoons. Particularly interested in race problems, Sam rather consistently pinioned me on Catholic treatment of the Negro. I could cite the principle, but he could indicate the practise—naming school after school which did not allow anything black but ink on its enrolment record, while I weakly backwatered and muttered feeble vagaries about extenuating circumstances.

Harry is a follower—not particularly brilliant, but a plugger with a heart, who spends vast amounts of time in dull but necessary routine work. Normally phlegmatic, his eyes can momentarily flash as he describes how a cop slugged some striker; but symbolic of the average proletarian when he turns Communist, he is satisfied to give unqualified allegiance to the leader of the cause, the success of which seems to guarantee the best world to live and work in.

And finally Jim, gradually swinging over to Communism, more through emotional than intellectual suasion. Constant bombardments with low income statistics, tales of capitalistic exploitation, of imminent war, of Soviet achievement, had toppled his defense of initial prejudice; and already he participates in the forum discussions, in general activities, pitifully attempting to hang on to fading status in his old social world.

A college man does not become a Communist without sacrifice. It may mean social ostracism. His best girl may cold-shoulder him; her father may tell him to get out and stay out. Students with peculiar tastes in humor will pull out red handkerchiefs whenever he approaches, or will suddenly break into a refrain "Down with everything!" as he enters the college hangout. Then all the sniggers, sneers and sad head-shakings behind his back, the professorial superciliousness toward the student who has been logical enough to vitalize and apply the materialistic principles taught him.

Now there is a world of difference between sympathizing with Communists and sympathizing with Communism. These young men—and young women—are human beings, often very idealistic human beings; and it is simply not fair to label them with every opprobrium under the sun. In more than one field they work for the same objectives that sound Catholic social doctrine advocates; and if they fail by excess, at least it is an honestly motivated excess. And most important for our attitude toward the American Communist—they do not want what theoretically they should want.

For instance, take the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship by force. Talk with a student Communist and find out whether he wants that. Perhaps he does, but chances are he is entirely sincere about the use of peaceful and democratic means—a technique recently ballyhooed by the party. I know it is traditional never to believe a Communist when he makes a promise unless the promise is a threat; but it is rational to believe him when he is manifestly sincere.

In the light of Spain, Communist adherence to democratic methods may appear dubious; yet, after all, a Latin is a Latin—and I don't recall any promise from Caballeros or the Syndicalists to respect the electoral rights if the Right won the rights. National situations and emotions are too complex for pouring into one universal mold; in America the hates are neither so intense nor the haters so prone to vindictiveness — either against capitalists or Catholics.

According to the popular stereotype, every Communist will gleefully spit in the face of a

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priest, shouting maliciously, "That for you, you feeder of opium to the people!" In Spain and Russia they may, but in America at least the student Communists won't. Last spring I accompanied a professor-priest into the boarding-house of some friends at the state university—dyed-in-the-wool Marxists, leaders of the campus movement. No heavy muffler swathed the Roman collar; and according to all theory someone should have twirled a bread-knife at the father's neck, or at least have slammed the door in his face. But there wasn't even a sizable sneer—only a hearty welcome and an almost pathetic eagerness to get his opinion about the new interior decoration of the flat. We left with no knives in our backs.

Perhaps they were only playing the traditional Communist rôle of snake in the grass, biding time till all priests could be slaughtered at once with impunity—but I doubt it. On a later visit I remarked that it seemed entirely unethical that Communists should play host to clerics, and was astounded by the rather irrelevant musing: "Priests must know a lot about human nature; what an opportunity to observe people confession must give!" And these are the future leaders of the movement!

Apparently American collegiate Communists do not hate Catholics so very much yet. At present it is more a case of Christian hating Communist. But if we continue to storm and sneer, to totally condemn and negate, then the barrier can swell beyond mere difference in creed. While the same personal qualities and national factors that make the aftermath of our election days so peaceful contrasted to European post-election upheavals, riots and revolts, also make for this comparative amity, I cannot discover any guarantee of inevitable amiability.

Either we change our method of fighting Communism, or we really fight for it and against ourselves. We convince no one, alienate many. And either we give the Communist credit for his good points, or we can blame ourselves if his bad points eventually become his only points. I do not propose any change in principle, for the philosophy of Marxism is incompatible with a spiritual *Weltanschauung*—but merely a change in emphasis, a new focal point for denunciation, where it will do the most good.

There is no question of a united front, which is a clever ruse for hooking reformists into at first voluntary cooperation, and once hooked, into obligatory trailing along. But there is a question of and a decided need for less "beware-of-Communism" speeches and more "reform-the-system" speeches. Then when we practise what we preach we won't have to worry about a Communism which, lacking sustenance, will just wither away.

THE WAKE

By MARY ELIZABETH MAGENNIS

WHATEVER the ills and stresses of our time, I am thankful that I have lived before the passing of the wake. What with the present-day custom of living in cliff-dwellings with only strangers about, and space too expensive to permit the congregation of friends in life or in death, the ritual seems definitely on the wane.

The term "wake" suggests the relatively subdued function of this civilization as compared with those that have come down in tradition from older races. It is chiefly in villages or small communities where older usage lingers that the tradition is likely to persevere. Families with numerous ramifications, too, are apt to maintain the custom. Death is the one force that seems able to unite scattered relatives for even a brief time. Then neighbors of days long past reassemble, people who have lost touch with one another for lack of common interests. Death reduces all to a sort of least common denominator, and for a few days at least the sense of fraternity is recaptured. Mrs. Casey might never find occasion to visit Mrs. Johnson, but when the time comes for both to offer up a prayer for the repose of Mrs. O'Hare's soul, they pass a lovely half-hour together, talking of nothing more important perhaps than the detail of long years of acquaintance with the deceased, and estimating her worth. Still, is there any better kind of conversation than this, in which sincerity and affection are so strong?

Those who indicate pious horror at the way people "enjoy" wakes should be pitied for the lack of independence in their thinking. Our friends and neighbors live well and in the fear of the Lord. They know they must leave their work and their pleasures here to go Home. In general they live to a fair age, and are satisfied to meet their dear ones gone before. Violent grief, histrionic sorrow, have no part in the lives of normal people. Aside from a feeling of sympathy for the bereaved and respect for his sense of loss, we need not become unduly grief-stricken. If we rejoice with friends at a birth or a marriage, should we not be able to remember at a death the teaching of religion that this life leads to a freer and a happier existence in the hereafter? There is as much promise, expectation, in death as in birth, and more. Undoubtedly great faith and fortitude are required to accept with resignation the death of a young and only child, or of the mother of small children. Where life is cut off at a point of expectancy, the blow is more crushing, and more of a challenge to faith. Perhaps because it takes greater imagination to comprehend life after death, most people are less able to sense the element of joy inherent in the Christian attitude toward death.

The Church has wisely made it a corporal work of mercy to bury the dead. The prayers offered up in such numbers are efficacious for the soul of the departed, and edifying to all who witness the customary ceremonial. The small pause in the midst of life's occupations that settles our thoughts for a time on the ultimate end is proper. Whoever has become accustomed to the experience of death realizes the beauty and consolation of

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receiving at this time kindly visits from friends, and assurance of their prayers.

From a purely human point of view the concourse of friends at a death is salutary. If it is well to perform the rites of respect and affection, what harm in doing the thing as joyously as may be? We should be safe in assuming that the unwitting cause of the wake would wish those left behind to be as little sad as possible. If, as sometimes happens, a death brings together members of a family or a community who have become estranged, it is good for them to be drawn together for a moment in a common human activity, lest they lose the saving sense of interdependence with their kind.

It would appear that a death in the family affords practically the only opportunity that many men and women have to officiate in a social capacity. Take the case of those who have never been the principals in so simple a thing as a high school or college commencement, who have neither married nor fared forth to see the world, who lead lives of constant work and of limited scope. When a brother or sister dies, such a worthy soul is for a brief time the center of interest. He meets his friends and relatives from other places. The simple pleasures of human intercourse have their rightful use in assuaging his sorrow. If he does not luxuriate in grief, nor profess a false affection (too late) for the deceased, it is good for him to be the center of interest.

The historian of a town or a family could procure material for a dozen books if he were to enter into the spirit of a wake. Uncle Henry recalls how grandma and grandpa eloped in a hay wagon in 1868. No, says Uncle John, no such thing. He remembers well that Hetty was married in '68 because she just had her golden wedding in 1918 the day of the Armistice, and during the goings-on she mentioned to him that the hay wagon they had planned to use had been newly painted and so they had had to use a neighbor's surrey. Various genealogical questions are settled: half-brothers and stepsisters assorted, Big Dinny's and Little Dinny's offspring distinguished, first-cousins-once-removed properly docketed, and family resemblances tracked down. The saga of the perpetuation of Uncle Ed's turned-up nose through various branches of the family may be interrupted by the arrival of a handsome young couple.

"There's young Jim Haines now with his wife. They just moved out to Ridgefield," whispers Uncle John.

"You don't mean to tell me that that's Jim Haines? Why, he's only a little shaver. . . . But come to think of it, I haven't seen him since I met him with his dad when Sally died. That was during the war. . . . And now he looks just like his father. Nice wife. The Haineses were always good pickers. Well, we're getting on, John, aren't we?"

And so on through the night.

In the day of really strenuous all-night wakes, it was a problem to stave off the demands of slumber. A walk over a moonlit bridge at four in the morning, a communal reading of a magazine or a poem ("The Highwayman" has proved fatally sleep-producing and is not recommended), or a well-timed cup of coffee have been found useful on occasion. Thereafter conversation ranging from the details of the whippoorwill's annual arrival in the near-by woods to most complicated problems like free will and pacifism may proceed with new vigor.

It is good to think that these highly social wakes help the dear ones to the place of "refreshment, light, and peace."

Communications

A CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: Father Phelan's review of Professor Gilson's "The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy," in THE COMMONWEAL of January 22, calls for a few words of comment. Any unbiased scholar must be impressed by M. Gilson's Gifford Lectures—their amazing erudition, original insight, and the telling contrast drawn between Greek thought and what Christian thinkers made of it. However, not a few have found fault with, or have been at great pains to qualify and "explain" his notion of "Christian Philosophy," so that it is hardly justifiable to say, as Father Phelan says, "Catholic thinkers of the first rank like Monsignor Noël and Jacques Maritain have done precisely that [hailed with enthusiasm M. Gilson's discovery of "Christian Philosophy" and accepted its implications]. But many lesser lights indulge in picayune discussions about the possibility of a Christian philosophy, after the manner of decadent scholastics, insisting, in stubborn disregard for ascertained facts, on the four elements of Aristotelean physics or fantastic theories about the rainbow."

Monsignor Noël, while hailing the historical aspect of M. Gilson's work, has definitely dissociated himself from the doctrinal part, and far from considering this a picayune matter he judged it sufficiently important to make it the topic of a communication at the Eighth International Congress of Philosophy in Prague. (See *Revue néoscolastique de philosophie,* November, 1934.) Moreover, Jacques Maritain has deemed the question of the possibility of a Christian philosophy sufficiently important to write two lengthy articles and one book on the matter. The latter begins as follows: "Is there a Christian philosophy? Is a Christian philosophy even conceivable?" The most important speculative questions, those which concern the nature of philosophy as well as those which concern the intellectual value of faith are involved here."

Furthermore, the considerable bibliography regarding Christian philosophy looks like a roster of foremost Christian thinkers of Europe, and their discussions have been limited almost uniquely to the possibility of a Christian philosophy. We see such names as Baudin, Blondel, Chenu, DeCorte, Feuling, Forest, Gouhier, Guérin, Jolivet, Kremer, Mandonnet, Marc, Maréchal, Masnovo, Motte, Penido, Roland-Gosselin, Romeyer, Sertillanges, Van Steenberghen, etc.

Father Phelan disclaims any "ipsedixitism" regarding M. Gilson; however, the plea made in his review sounds very much like it. There are many Catholic thinkers who

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refuse to be stampeded into a cult of M. Gilson's views because of "his discovery by a great secular university"; it is all too possible that M. Gilson's charm as a lecturer and writer accounts to a certain degree for his "discovery" in this quarter. Catholics would be much more impressed if the university in question and other secular universities where M. Gilson has been "discovered," would hasten to secure promising students of M. Gilson for their history and philosophy departments. They would like to see the message rather than the man accepted.

Moreover, lending to the above-mentioned European spokesmen, who are indeed qualified judges, the same "attentive ear and teachable mind" which Father Phelan would seemingly have reserved for M. Gilson, many sincerely find very serious reasons for disputing M. Gilson's opinions. This may consign them to Father Phelan's "lesser lights" but they can rejoice in very good company that cannot be dismissed with an odious comparison.

HARRY MCNEILL.

ROMAN ASTUTENESS

Middle Village, N. Y.

TO the Editor: In non-Catholic circles we very often hear now criticisms of our Church and especially of the Roman Curia and the different hierarchies as to their attitude toward the politically and economically powerful of this world. Special criticisms are given to the attitude of the Church in Spain and the strong sympathies for Franco among Catholics outside Spain. Another object of bitter comment is the readiness of the German hierarchy to join Hitler in what he calls fighting Communism and to swallow all the injustices not only to the Church, but the far more atrocious wrong he has committed against Jews, Communists, pacifists and the working class as a whole, by sacrificing their material and human welfare and freedom to what seems to his adversaries the interest of militarists and capitalists.

Protestants, especially, say that the attitude of compromise of the Vatican diplomats is built on too human a consideration and has no foundation in the teaching of Our Lord and the Apostles.

Have they not perhaps overlooked Luke, xiv, 31, 32: "What King, about to go to make war against another king, does not first sit down, and think whether he be able, with ten thousand, to meet him that, with twenty thousand, cometh against him? Or else, whilst the other is yet far off, sending an embassy, he desireth conditions of peace." Although Our Lord quotes this not as a rule of policy He speaks of the difficulty of the narrow path of perfection and shows an attitude which justifies the Church in trying to negotiate even with her worst human enemies. It is the attitude of calmness based on the strength of her faith. "Haec est victoria nostra quae vincit mundum, fides nostra." The strongest enemy in the world is weaker than the defenseless Church, who is Christ's living body. So she can take a temporary risk and deal with her enemy because she is sure of the final victory, and looking at her "ten thousand" compared with his "twenty thousand," is wiser in accepting his conditions than she would be in risking an open battle at this moment.

Is not this apparent weakness basically built on the rock of faith? Has she not outlived her worst enemies within and without herself? So what scornfully is called "Roman astuteness" and unevangelical curial diplomacy seems to be founded on very evangelical grounds. Whom she cannot convince she will outlive in patience. It may be hard for the individual to accept the far-reaching principles of a wise tradition and the Boanerges of all times have grumbled at the longanimity of the Master—but He told them: "You know not of what spirit you are."

REFUGEE.

CAPITALISM AND THE FACTS

Brooklyn, N. Y.

TO the Editor: In the thought provoking article entitled, "Capitalism and the Facts" (January 8), Professor Mercier premises his main argument on the assumption that the mainspring or the essential feature of capitalism lies in the accumulation of wealth.

This it seems to me is stretching a part of a definition to suit a pet theory entirely out of proportion to the facts of our modern life.

An adequate study of all available facts of capitalism will disclose, *nolens volens,* that the quintessence of capitalism is not the mere accumulation of wealth. This has existed since the dawn of civilization. The life-stream of capitalism is the active use of wealth or more particularly money (capital) and property for the purpose of making more money for the owners of the means of production and distribution.

All this may be a bitter Marxian pill to the Professor and others like minded and of course anathema to them. But will that change this stubborn fact about capitalism?

If the object of the contribution is to be apologetic concerning capitalism in the sense that the author objects to the wholesale condemnation of capitalism, few except extremists will find fault. But if the intention of the author is some support of capitalism, he will have to "dig a little deeper" for such benevolent facts about capitalism which may have been overlooked by Seligman, Mallock et al.

BENJAMIN DAUBLIN.

MOTHER ELIZABETH SETON

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor: I am wondering if through the columns of THE COMMONWEAL I might ask if any of your readers knows of the existence of any letters of Mother Seton, either in the original or in transcripts other than those in the Emmitsburg, Baltimore Cathedral, or Notre Dame Archives. If any letters do exist, I should deeply appreciate copies of them, either photostat or written, but if written they should be exact as to spelling, punctuation, etc. I shall deeply appreciate any cooperation, no matter how slight it might seem to the one able to give it. Mother Seton's cause continues to make progress in Rome; in fact there is every indication that the time will not be far distant when the Church will make its final decision regarding the heroicity of the virtues of this great American woman.

REV. JOSEPH B. CODE.

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Seven Days' Survey

The Church.—Bishop Schlarman of Peoria, Ill., has urged a Family Mass Crusade as the principal Lenten activity in his diocese this year. Each family enrolled will be represented at Mass by at least one of its members every day throughout the penitential season. Catholic family life is the intention of the crusade. Bishop Muench of Fargo, North Dakota, addressed a Lenten pastoral letter to his priests and people urging the restoration of common family devotions in the home. "If we do not return to the ideals of our Catholic forebears . . . in what respect will our homes differ from those of the pagans around about us in which one sees . . . no crucifix, no holy water, no holy pictures, nothing in fact that marks the Christian home?" * * * St. Francis Home for the Homeless in Hong Kong is sheltering a number of the poor coolies who otherwise spend the night on the city's pavements in real danger of death from exposure. Twelve of the first twenty sheltered last year have already been baptized. Several hundred destitute Chinese women deported from Mexico, their husbands' native land, have, together with their families, been supported largely by their fellow Catholics in Hong Kong during the past few years. * * * The *Scientific American* for March contains an article by Dr. Paul Vignon, professor of biology at the Institut Catholique of Paris, on the evidence for the authenticity of the Holy Shroud of the Saviour, which is preserved at Turin, Italy. * * * Over 500 delegates attended the fifth annual session of the All-India Catholic Congress at Trichur, Malabar, with all parts of British and French India and the Native States represented. The Congress recommended that groups be established in every diocese to study the social question in the light of the papal encyclicals. * * * For the fourth time the French Confederation of Christian Workers have been compelled to move to larger quarters. Their recent headquarters will still be used for consumer cooperatives and a low-priced restaurant, but the general secretariat has been moved to the new home recently blessed by Cardinal Verdier. * * * The WPA Theatre Project of 303 West 42nd Street, New York, is preparing a list of high quality Catholic plays for use in amateur dramatics. The compilers would welcome suggested plays.

The Nation.—The dispute over the judiciary boiled along through the week. A Senate subcommittee endorsed the Sumners bill, the first positive compromise offering, which provides for full-pay, optional retirement of Supreme Court Justices at seventy. There was no prospect that such a compromise would have a chance of passage until the debate had run much longer. * * * Yale University announced that as successor to President James R. Angell, the Corporation had appointed Professor Charles Seymour, provost of the university and history professor. * * * The Twentieth Century Fund, publishing its exhaustive findings on the American tax situation, reports that there are 175,000 counties, cities, school districts and other local units—in addition to the state and federal governments—levying and collecting taxes in this country. The researchers believe this multiplicity "leads inevitably to conflict between the scores of thousands of taxing jurisdictions" and that centralizing shifting of power has "broken up traditional tax patterns and intensified the search for federal, state and local tax coordination"; but they fear the system "cannot be remedied without sacrificing an important degree of state or local independence." * * * With a normal increase in the electric business, the problem of public-private cooperation is expected to be pushed forward within two or three years by a genuine shortage in available electric power. Anticipating some sort of necessary pooling with the government's huge hydroelectric projects, several great utilities that resisted the Holding Company Act and refused to register with the SEC, have recently changed their policy. Last week it was the North American Company and the American Water Works and Electric Company. * * * With "black blizzards" raging in the dust bowl of the Southwest, President Roosevelt urged upon Congress a plan to rehabilitate lands in ten states and help 4,000,000 persons to escape the dust storms that are ruining the nation's granary. The 25-point program is directed at coordinated effort to have land put to the most appropriate agricultural use.

The Wide World.—Following a strong French complaint that the London parley on non-intervention in Spain was at least as dilatory as a snail, the powers agreed to cease "volunteering" on February 20, and to fix March 6 as the date when a patrol by neutral powers would be inaugurated to prevent foreign aid. Portugal alone was recalcitrant. Meanwhile Rightist troops had waged a more or less continuous attack on the highways leading from Valencia to Madrid. Communication was not shut off, but at some points convoys had to traverse roads exposed to shell fire. Madrid's defenders tried to establish unity of command, but there were persistent rumors that the advantage was now definitely with the Rightists. Damage to Malaga, now held by General Franco, is reported to have been very great. * * * Great Britain, preparing to witness the coronation of George VI and Queen Elizabeth, was harassed by problems incident to rearmament. The Chancellor of the Exchequer told the House of Commons that a loan of £400,000,000 would be floated to supply moneys additional to those derivable from taxation. It was reported that the total sum needed during the next five years for ships, aircraft and army equipment would be £1,500,000,000. Measures to safeguard the civilian population in case of an aerial attack were being stressed. * * * Holland refused to permit a Dutch citizen to serve as League Commissioner for Danzig. Therewith the worst of all League failures

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reached a new climax. During years when the principal problem was safeguarding the independence of the city against the claims of a weak Germany, the solons of Geneva were at least moderately active. Now that one of the most fundamental of League obligations—the protection of imperiled minorities—is being tested in Danzig as nowhere else in the world, Geneva would like to talk Poland into being the supervisor. Numerous observers conceded that this was to date the nadir of League activities. The Polish government, in view of serious economic and social difficulties at home, cannot assume responsibility. Nazi depredations on Jewish, Catholic and Protestant minorities have reached a new peak during recent weeks. * * * Though tension between the army and the political parties of Japan had not disappeared, there was less excitement. General Hayashi, the new Premier, addressed the Diet in terms of great moderation. He suggested that peace in the Orient was the supreme issue, and that differences between Japan, China and Russia must be settled amicably.

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Mexico.—On Sunday, February 14, Catholics and also Protestants in Orizaba, Vera Cruz, and in several other towns of that Mexican state, occupied their churches in prayer without molestation for the first time in years. The churches were not yet officially open, however, and there was no Mass. The law of Vera Cruz would permit the registration of one priest for every 100,000 of population, but the executive has never allowed any actual registration. Last month 150,000 Catholic citizens of the state signed a petition for the restoration of religious worship, but nothing relaxed the strict anti-religious régime until February 7. On that date, 73 persons were surprised by government agents at a clandestine Mass, and when they attempted to escape, the police fired and killed an unidentified boy (not regularly reported in the papers) and a fourteen-year-old girl, Leonor Sanchez. This aroused a tremendous sensation, and crowds of Catholics proceeded to occupy the barred churches and to ring the bells. They quickly got in touch with the central government of President Lazaro Cárdenas. Federal troops were rushed to preserve order and an investigation into the killings commenced. At first, Governor Miguel Aleman attempted to eject the throngs from the churches, but this proved impractical, and they were allowed to stay peacefully. He was believed to be under pressure of the President to bring a relaxation in persecution and a peaceful settlement, and also under the pressure of strong local groups of anti-religious radicals, to whom is attributed the murder of the Governor-elect, whom Governor Aleman recently replaced. The churches may be turned over by the Federal Finance Minister to local groups of Catholics, according to the regular law.

Religion in Germany.—Extraordinary developments in the situation of the Christian Churches include: a sermon on the Concordat, by Cardinal Faulhaber, addressed to 5,000 Catholics attending Mass at St. Michael's; and a government order, following the resignation of Dr. Hans Kerrl, that Lutherans were to choose a new synod by elections. (Incidentally the United Press statement that this was the first time Hitler had entered into the Protestant religious dispute is palpably erroneous.) The Cardinal said emphatically: "The Reich Concordat is not a decree, signed under pressure. It is a treaty which was freely negotiated and signed in good faith. How can other governments have confidence in the word of Germany's statesmen or believe that she will keep her agreements when this treaty with the Vatican, freely entered into and signed, has not been kept?" In the Lutheran churches, leaders wondered whether the new elections would differ materially from those held in 1933—disgraceful manifestations of suppression and connivance. During recent months, the war on religion has entered what seems a new phase. All Nazi training courses emphasize, according to reports obtained from wholly reliable sources, the Rosenberg point of view that Christianity and Judaism are alike poisonous to the German soul. The labor service groups are not yet as virulent as the S.S. formations, yet even in them attacks on religion are part of the day's activities. So far the German army has been relatively free of these trends, though propaganda is active there also. Throughout the civil service, abandonment of religious ties is growing. Protestant and Catholic Churches alike have reported hundreds of such apostasies. In so far as Catholics are concerned, one cause is doubtless the sharp language of the most recent Fulda encyclical, which denounces those whom a "non-German weakness of character" leads to favoring laicist schools because it is to their temporal advantage. This encyclical was to some extent a reply to Rosenberg, who has asserted—in his capacity as director of German education—that the Nazi party would cling to the dictum that every German child must be educated in the National-Socialist sense exclusively.

Labor.—The General Motors settlement left labor somewhat in a state of suspense. The import of that agreement within the company will not become apparent for six months, during which time the company has pledged itself not to bargain with others than the union in all the recently struck plants. William Green condemned the ending as a great loss for labor. Admirers of the C.I.O. took a wholly different view. John L. Lewis said: "The situation boils down to this. Seven weeks ago General Motors would not deal with or recognize a labor union—it never had and it had publicly proclaimed that it would not do so in the future. Now, after seven weeks, it has made a contract that is entirely satisfactory and that paves the way for an adjusted relationship in the industry that is rational and constructive." Interest centered around threats of future strikes. Mr. Lewis told reporters, "I abhor strikes, as you know," and then said that the auto union would continue in logical fashion and take up "the so-called Ford problem." The most important threat, however, is against steel: "I hope that the United States Steel Corporation will approach the problem of union recognition in a rational and constructive way. I am willing to learn." Some commentators believed that G.M. let down its big business colleagues and

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made it more difficult now for industries to combat unionization. It is possible that March will find strikes in both steel and coal. On February 17, conferences about a new wage contract between the bituminous operators of the Appalachian area and the United Mine Workers began in New York. A national convention of steel workers has been called for next month. Meanwhile Sidney Hillman, head of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, told of industry-wide negotiations between union and owner. "In the midst of industrial strife," Mr. Hillman declared, "here is an industry which amicably negotiates on all questions. An increase of wages was asked for and gained on the basis that the workers in the industry are entitled to a larger share of the fruits of their industry, a share that will enable the workers to live on a higher standard of life."

New York and Child Labor.—Efforts to revive New York State interest in the child labor amendment have been aided by a resolution presented to the state assembly for ratification by Jane Todd. This urged Congress to pass laws making "goods, wares and merchandise" in interstate commerce subject to state laws regulating child labor. Thus New York would be empowered to stop receipt of shipments from plants or producing centers where child labor is employed. Meanwhile the New York State Catholic Welfare Committee had been campaigning against ratification of the Federal Child Labor Amendment, as suggested in a recent bill. It therefore also took steps to oppose the legislation sponsored by Miss Todd. The Committee itself argues that the amendment is "objectionable as an unnecessary, unwise and obsolete delegation of state authority." Great stress is laid upon the view "that there is no longer in our nation any uncontrolled or uncontrollable problem of child labor." The assertion that abandonment of the NRA codes has led to a vast increase in the employment of children is denied. "An honest review of all available information and data, as concerns child labor and youth employment in and outside the State of New York, definitely shows that there is no marked increase in child labor since the ending of the NRA codes," we read. The Committee sponsors efforts to effect uniformity in state laws regulating child labor. It quotes with approval the following from a 1936 report of the New York State Industrial Compact Commission: "It is the opinion of the Commission that the potentialities of the interstate compact as a means for achieving uniformity in the laws of the various states affecting labor and industry are sufficient to justify further study and cooperation with the representatives of other states through the Interstate Conference on Labor Compacts. It is recommended, accordingly, that this Commission be reestablished and continued in existence."

Blocs and Fronts.—*La Flèche* of Paris recently published a statement made to Gaston Bergery by Spaniards who are fighting against General Franco to the effect that "the great bulk of the Spanish people are neither Stalinites nor Fascists. They refuse to make this choice and that is why the majority of the people are no longer in the fight as they were in the beginning. . . . There is only one solution: Spain, aided by effective non-intervention, must forcibly rid herself of her tutors from Moscow and Berlin." *Sept,* weekly review of the Dominican Fathers of Juvisy, believes that "temporal forces have for some time been trying to exploit for their own ends the irreducible opposition between materialistic Communism and Christianity; interests which do not come forth openly strongly approve of the Church for combating Communism. . . . Communism can be successfully combated only by pure arms, by means that neither morality nor divine laws condemn. In other words, most of the champions of anti-Communism would do well to examine their own consciences. Such at least is the advice" of the *Neue Wiener Tagblatt,* which seriously questions the right of National-Socialism "to place itself at the head of a supposed anti-Communist crusade" because of the Nazi campaign against Christianity and their lack of respect for the human person. And this lining up is particularly dangerous in France, where apprehension continues to increase over the prolongation of the Spanish war. *Sept* says, "In order that France be saved from the fate of unhappy Spain, everything must be done to avoid the sterile opposition of blocs." And *La Flèche* declares, "But especially should no man resign himself to war and death for ideologies which enslave him and crush and deny the human person. And what better proof can be found of the utter unsuitability of these two credos for our race and soil than the fact that we have more anti-Fascists than Communists, more anti-Communists than Fascists. Thus the two forces which confront each other comprise fewer and fewer real believers but, instead, exhausted soldiers marching to battle under banners of negation."

Non-Catholic Religious Activities. — Brotherhood Day, February 20 and 21, was officially endorsed by the governors of thirty-two states. The purpose of this nation-wide observance is to emphasize the cooperation between Protestants, Catholics and Jews as American citizens and to oppose totalitarianism with its hatreds and strife. To quote Governor Wilbur L. Cross of Connecticut, "America is the land of many peoples. It is also the land of freedom. That these conditions can exist together without misapprehension is due to the fact that, regardless of spiritual and social difference, there are wide areas of common ground where all may unite and work together for social improvement. Brotherhood Day, as I see it, has as its purpose the pronouncement of this principle that we may more fully appreciate it and avail ourselves of the opportunity to continue to 'Make America Safe for Differences.'" * * * Thirty religious groups met in New York, February 11, under the auspices of the American Friends Service Committee, to inaugurate a campaign to raise $100,000 during 1937 for the relief of women and children on both sides of the battle-front in Spain "in a non-sectarian spirit of conciliation and good-will." In the words of John F. Reich, secretary of the Committee on Spain, "We hope that our efforts to supplement the feeding of children will provide Americans an opportunity to demonstrate to the people of Spain the love and sympathy

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which goes out of this country to all people suffering catastrophes." * * * The News Bulletin of the National Lutheran Council reports that at the Royal University of Tokyo, Japan, 3,000 students described themselves as agnostics, 1,500 as atheists, 300 as Buddhists, 60 as Christians and 6 as Confucianists. "Of 30,000 college students in Japan 27,000 or 90 percent now declare themselves to be without religion of any sort."

Religion in Education.—The realization by eminent Protestant leaders of the present need for deeper and better religious training has been reflected in a number of addresses. Among the most effective was Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick's sermon to the Protestant Teachers' Association in New York, on February 14. He pointed out that in more than 400 communities a portion of the school time was now being set aside for religious instruction, and that the total number of pupils enrolled last year exceeded 225,000. This is, it must be admitted, a small portion of the nation's public school youth as a whole; but there are signs that the movement is growing. Dr. Fosdick added: "I commend this to you as one of the most significant movements in education today. It has challenged the attention of the nation. Surely complete education does include religion to prepare young people with deep resources of religious faith. All is not well with the youth of this land. You school teachers are saying what so desperately needs to be said in this country. You are saying that children must have religion—intelligent, ethical religion. Where would we have been without that in America?"

* * * *

Cooperation under Despotism. — The Bureau of Labor Statistics report on consumers' cooperative societies throughout the world in 1935, commented on in the *Monthly Labor Review,* gives some interesting data on the compatibility of cooperatives and various sort of authoritarian régimes. "With a few outstanding exceptions, substantial gains and an improved status generally were reported in every country. The exceptions were mainly in countries where the cooperative movement is no longer accorded the standing of a free, democratic and autonomous institution. . . . The reports from Austria indicate that in 1935 the cooperative movement was beginning to recover from the depression and the effects of the civil strife of 1934; the autonomy of the movement was restored during the year. . . . The year 1935 is characterized as 'undoubtedly one of the most difficult in the history of the German cooperative movement.' Since January, 1935, propaganda for consumers' cooperatives has been forbidden. More and more, it is reported, the cooperative societies are being transformed into private stores, in many cases under the direction of the former managers. The German wholesale society no longer contains in its name the word 'cooperative,' and it is not controlled by member cooperative societies nor is its business confined to that with cooperative societies. . . . Whereas in 1932 from 4½ to 5 percent of the retail trade of the country passed through cooperative channels, by 1935 this proportion had fallen to 2 percent. . . . The autonomy of the consumers' cooperative movement in the Soviet Union has been a matter of doubt for some time. Fundamental to the cooperative movement is the free, voluntary, democratic character. . . . That this distinction was not recognized by the public authorities is evidenced by the assertion, from an official source, that 'the abolition of the card system for bread, flour and cereals and the establishment of unified prices for all the main food products and widely used articles, completely removed the difference between the cooperative store and the state store.' The movement was thus regarded as only one channel of trade, to be dove-tailed into the system of distribution under government control. On the ground that the societies' facilities were inadequate to supply the population, the whole urban network of societies was abolished by decree of September 5, 1935, and their assets were transferred to the Commissariat of Internal Trade."

Farm Proposals.—The nation's farm leaders closeted with Secretary Wallace, February 8 and 9, unanimously endorsed a series of recommendations to be put before the present session of Congress for enactment. The chief feature of the program is the ever-normal granary idea, whereby farmers borrow, in years of full crops and low prices, against their surplus commodities, which are to be stored and guarded under federal supervision, and repay the government in cash or in kind in years of small crops and high prices. These government loans would be made on the basis of the approximate average prices of principal crops during past years and the whole system is devised to prevent agricultural commodities from falling below certain fixed prices in the domestic market and is quite similar to the corn and cotton loans in the early days of the AAA. Whenever the normal granary system fails to prevent the fall of prices below the established level, benefit payments are to be provided for by the new legislation. Finally permanent government agencies should be set up to take the place of the present federal farm agencies, which are of a temporary and emergency character. President Roosevelt's committee on farm tenancy reported, February 11, that more than half of the farmers in the nation do not own the land they work and that nearly 3,000,000 farmers are living under such pitiable conditions that they are "easy prey to economic and even political parasites." The committee recommended the formation of a long-range state-federal program which would include: low-interest loans to tenants to enable them to become owners, with amortization in forty years, or twenty years for the tenants that desire it; financial assistance to enable present owners to keep their farmsteads (40,000 of them were found to be losing their farms each year); the enactment of state laws to protect tenants as such, and the extension of loans to rehabilitate tenants not yet ready for ownership; retirement of submarginal land. Mr. Roosevelt passed these on to Congress with characteristic picturesqueness of phrase, February 16, when several minority reports to the effect that this "small homestead philosophy" alone would not produce the idyllic conditions envisioned also appeared.

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The Play and Screen

The Masque of Kings

"THE MASQUE OF KINGS," Maxwell Anderson's third play to be given this season, while not possessing the artistic stature of his "High Tor," is a distinctly interesting work. It is based on the tragedy of Crown Prince Rudolph of Austria's love for Marie Vetsera, to which Mr. Anderson gives a new interpretation. He invents a liberal revolution, headed by Rudolph and the Archduke John, against the aristocratic tyranny of Emperor Franz Josef, whom Rudolph makes prisoner. The Emperor taunts his son with his liberal ideas, which he declares show his weakness, and tells him that no revolution is ever successful until it is complete. Rudolph decides to make it complete by the execution of his father, whereupon the Emperor salutes his son, saying that he will die happy in knowing that his successor has proved himself a true Hapsburg. Horrified at the truth of his father's words and at what he was about to do, Rudolph calls off the revolution. He goes with Marie Vetsera to his hunting lodge at Mayerling, and here Marie confesses that she had been a spy set over him by his father, but that she had sent no reports about him after she had fallen in love with him. Rudolph denounces her, whereupon she kills herself. The Emperor enters with the Empress, and he tells Rudolph that he can go away with Marie. It is now, however, too late and Rudolph kills himself, realizing that he has lost both the woman he loves and the power to give Austria a liberal government.

It is to Mr. Anderson's credit that he visualized his play not as a conventional love story, but as a tragedy of the liberal mind and temper. The character of the weak, well-meaning Rudolph is a splendid foil for the indomitable Franz Josef, cynical, courageous, believing utterly in the Hapsburgs and the Hapsburg ideal. The scenes between the father and son are beautifully written and ably conceived, and possess an internal drama that is rare in American plays. It is at these moments that Mr. Anderson once more proves himself the one American dramatist who possesses the universal touch. The last act in which the love element dominates is weak because we are not really interested in the heroine or in Rudolph's love for her. How much this is Mr. Anderson's fault and how much the fault of the actors might be debated. Mr. Hull is not convincing. His acting is febrile, and his enunciation lamentable. Margo's Marie Vetsera while sometimes appealing in a pathetic sort of way lacks distinction and true poignancy. The result is that these two characters never come to life as they might have had they been differently played. But to Dudley Digges for his Franz Josef goes the accolade of our admiration. He is the old Emperor to the life, cynical, human, a trifle fussy, cemented in the rock of his prejudices. Excellent performances, too, are given by Pauline Frederick as the Empress Elizabeth, by Joseph Holland as the Archduke John, by Leo G. Carroll as Count Hojos, by Glenn Anders as Koinoff, and by Claudia Morgan as the Countess Larisch. (At the Sam S. Shubert Theatre.)

Fulton of Oak Falls

FOR THOSE who are willing to take it for just what it is this play rewritten from a manuscript of Parker Fennelly by George M. Cohan will give pleasure. It is sentimental, its construction is none too firmly knit, and some of its dialogue is dated, but it is kindly, human, and at times well observed. Mr. Cohan despite the mannerisms which seem to grow on him, is always a dominating actor and carries the burden of the play with gusto and effect. His admirers will like him and most that he does and says. His fellow players are on the whole well chosen, and one young actress in particular, Rita Johnson, reveals herself as one of the most charming and natural ingenues we have seen this season. There are those who will say that "Fulton of Oak Falls" is old fashioned, but it possesses none the less a nostalgic charm which many theatregoers will find appealing. (At the Playhouse.)

GRENVILLE VERNON.

Fire over England

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS turned attention for the moment from international intrigue to award to "Fire over England" its own cinema medal of honor for the year, acting by unanimous vote of the 52 member nations. Questionable is the full justification for the extent of the League's enthusiasm. The production unmistakingly does stand out in high relief, but it is far from reaching high perfection, technically, and in the beginning moves all too slowly.

"Fire over England" was made in London by Hollywood's William K. Howard, director, and a partially Hollywood cast and some Hollywood technicians. It is an historical romance-tinged drama of Elizabethan days that is climaxed by an exciting portrayal of the Spanish Armada's dramatic destruction in the battle that changed the course of world history when it started England's great dominion and domination of the sea. Through it runs all of the chivalry, great traditions and the pomp and splendor of the court of the horse-faced, though magnificent Queen Elizabeth. Imaginative speculation is welded strongly to authentic fact. It gains impressive realism by adhering to the naturally dramatic history, controlled so the personal romance and drama are not lost.

April Romance

METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER imported "April Romance" from England, where the British producers used a comparatively obscure cast to play some romantic episodes in the life of Franz Schubert. Regardless, the performances are quite acceptable. Richard Tauber, continental singer and actor, in the rôle of the composer, sings several Schubert melodies superbly, drawing special sympathy when he renders "Ave Maria" at the wedding ceremony of a soldier to the girl whom Schubert had mistakingly believed was his sweetheart. The English producers worked leisurely, though respectfully, building the setting—Vienna, in 1820—impressively in its seeming accuracy of detail. The songs and music, of course, predominate all else.

JAMES P. CUNNINGHAM.

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Books

Snapshot of Utopia

Spanish Prelude, by Jenny Ballou. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.50.

THE SCENE of Jenny Ballou's prize-winning novel, "Spanish Prelude," is Madrid just before Alfonso's abdication. A large part of her story is contained in what she leaves unsaid. What she leaves unsaid is plain enough: civil war will climax her characters' lives. With bombs and cannon rendering a sort of future off-stage accompaniment, the very pointlessness of the incidents she relates takes on, by contrast, a deep meaning, and she needs to indicate no definite conclusions to her characters' actions, since history will supply them. In her own way, she has solved the problem so difficult for the modern novelist and displayed people engaged in responsible moral action by showing, in retrospect, their Nemesis in General Franco's legions; for all her characters are surely now fighting on the side of the Valencia government.

The story is told in the first person and living characters enter it, so that it is hard to say where fiction ends and autobiography begins. The latter perhaps predominates, not only because this is a first novel, but also because one is not aware of a second, auctorial, personality behind the fictional narrator, Rosa—as one is, for instance, in the case of Conrad's Marlowe. Rosa is an American, a typical expatriate—aside from her moderation in drink—in search of her soul and material for her novels (yet unwritten); she stays abed late of mornings, day-dreaming, after the manner of the Madrid intellectuals, toward whom she is yet ironically detached. Her picture of Madrid's "advance guard" is at once painted from a similarity of viewpoint and amused appreciation of the strangeness of foreigners.

So far Miss Ballou's novel does not differ greatly (except for the Nemesis foreseen) from many novels of futility, but the book's distinction lies in Rosa's attitude toward her servants. She resigned herself to their ill-will, knowing "that while there are masters and servants, until all are masters and all are servants, our kindest gesture will be distorted and come back to us unrecognizable, covered with the slime of something entirely outside of our individual selves." In other words, Rosa came to Rousseau's conclusions that it is society which corrupts man's natural goodness. But a "young writer had uttered a phrase" that showed her how the pure self was to escape its social envelope: "I mean the people of social importance—the workers." Before leaving Spain she saw, in her mind's eye, "fields of life! All are peasants and all are city dwellers and the people are straight and the machines glisten in the first Gold Age. Nobody buys or sells and nobody holds secrets with flowers in their mouths, nobody calls crimes, crimes, crimes, and nobody is cold in the village." Rosa also saw the mountain street where she stood "flooded . . . in a sudden blood-red light." And this last phrase in Miss Ballou's novel is its aptest, for lands where "there will be no masters and no servants" are always to be found just beyond the next river of blood.

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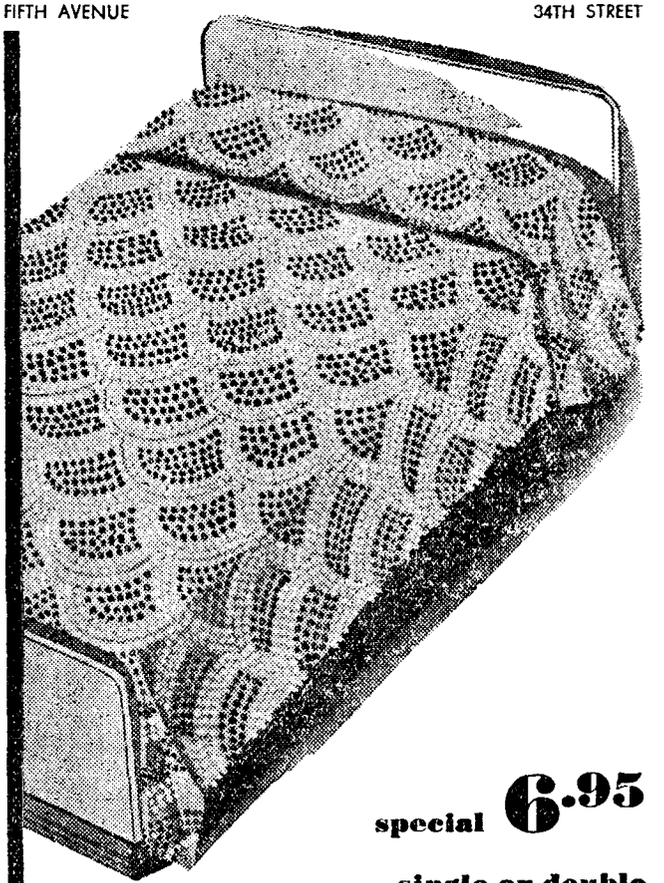

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Next Week

EUROPEAN CATHOLICS AND SPAIN, by Barbara Carter, is, in the first place, a necessity. Then, it is very, very interesting. Miss Carter writes a brief index of the eminent Catholics of Europe and England who do not see in the Spanish war the simple Crusade which many fervent but hasty Catholics have proclaimed it unmitigated to be. The attitude toward the Insurgents of those Catholics Miss Carter writes about keeps them from experiencing the psychological delight of plumbing for one side and finding deep and satisfying release, but it does, we believe, add immeasurably to a Catholic outlook—however unhappy and still unrelaxed—toward the present Spanish and world tragedy. . . . FREE AND EASY, by Charles F. Whitcomb, is a thoroughly enjoyable, completely unacademic, scolding. The question is, what is it that American youth is to be trained for: tabloid or esoteric thoughts and words—or what? The newer education must beware that it does not restrict its success to the preservation of the quite open and quite vacant mind. . . . THE MAN WITH A PLOW, by L. G. Ligutti, speaks with the authority of a country pastor and a leader of the Iowa rural rehabilitation movement, about several causes of tenancy which do not register well in charts. Inherent in the examination of the causes is a definition of methods of reform. Certain desires of the new-fashioned agricultural industry are not compatible with owner-owned farms, and therefore, with a sound nation. . . . HEAVEN DOES MATTER, by Peter Whiffin, will delight our readers who remember the stimulation of the same author's "Reading from Rodriguez," and "Sentimental Atheists." The same charm and the same probing intelligence are used to query those who consider themselves too busy or too "practical" or too whatever to consider heaven. The answers are in the Catechism, and this article helps in understanding and appreciating those answers.

In Exitu Israel

The Jews of Germany: A Story of Sixteen Centuries, by Marvin Lowenthal. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $3.00.

DURING the World War many a minor historian undertook to state the case for his own side or review events and people of hostile countries. Such writings, while of minimal value historically, gained recognition as powerful builders of morale and grew quite naturally into useful propaganda. National affiliation with its consequent family-feeling sways vision and judgment in most such instances as could again be witnessed in local Italian papers during the recent Italian-Ethiopian conflict. Similarly, the tragic struggle of Jewry in Germany is still too living and moving a drama to allow us to expect an objective or judicially tempered presentation by any of its protagonists, whether Jew or Nazi. It is then almost inevitable to find in this "story of sixteen centuries" a recital of well-founded grievances mixed with a distorting emotionalism.

In order to give form to such an enormous stretch in time, Mr. Lowenthal sketches his history in four books, akin to four acts of a tragic play, of which the first book might be considered a Prologue: the first thousand years, introducing the first bloody massacres with the Crusades. From this sad opening act we follow the Jews to their "Degradation" during the Middle Ages, as gold-traders, usurers and "servants of the treasury," oppressed, abused and pushed into ghettoes. The period of the German Reformation and succeeding centuries of liberalistic tendencies brought eventual "Emancipation" as a second act climax, only to be lost again in the latest rise of anti-Semitism under Hitler, as pictured in the last and longest act, "Rejection." The author holds out no hope for the unfortunate Jew in Germany. He believes that the world will do nothing or have at best but a sympathetic shrug at this "tragic curtain" of the German Jew.

No one can read this book and remain unmoved and no Christian can read it and fail to feel humiliation and shame. Yet it is not necessary to adopt the author's viewpoint or agree with his conclusions. There will be many German Jews who will not subscribe to Mr. Lowenthal's statement "that it was Jew-hatred which made people Nazi, and not the Nazis who made people hate Jews" (page 355). It seems unfair to saddle the German people as a whole with the official racial anti-Semitism of its Jew-baiting leaders, although they cannot escape blame and responsibility altogether. Certainly the official organ of German Jewry, *Juedische Rundschau,* is of a different opinion than Mr. Lowenthal; the "Aufruf" published in its pages three years ago, by that revered Jewish sage Martin Buber, definitely shows this. Likewise, a different picture is drawn for us by Franz Kobler in a recent book covering three centuries of Jewish history in Germany, based on letters of well-known Jews and Christians. On the whole, the author seems to belong to those who show a greater resentment at the reaction of explosions of accumulated antagonism than the false justification given to it by anti-Semitic prejudice.

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Yet the life of the Jew under the Nuremberg laws is incredibly hard. Such callousness toward human life and value is only approached by Russia's treatment of Kulaks or our Black Legion. It almost appears as if the Nazi slogan "Deutschland erwache" has put the Old Germany to sleep: a hypnotic trance to some, a dreadful nightmare to others. On the other hand, everyone familiar with the Jewish situation in Germany knows also that many individuals are still well off or ply their trade and profession as before.

Viewing the Jewish problem in a Christian state in its wider implications, Mr. Lowenthal reduces it first to a purely economic problem and then envisions solution and salvation from the Left. ". . . The wider view does suggest . . . that since their welfare depended on an economy free and sound enough to give no occasion for racial or religious fanaticism, . . . they might have accepted whatever new economy offered a chance of tranquillity and tolerance. . . . A socialized economy . . . would offer the hope of tolerance and human decency" (page 387). This view does not stand any historical test; religious or racial animosities do not invariably rise from economic envies or hatreds. To the believing Christian the pattern of life and of history is providentially influenced and directed. The central point of mankind's history is to him Christ, the Divine Saviour, mankind's Messiah. This furnishes him with a perspective and an inner understanding of events even where he deplores or disapproves. Judaism's inability to accept Him is still its true tragedy; the future possibility of such an acceptance is still its true hope.

GREGORY FEIGE.

A Menu of Many Courses

The Nile: The Life-Story of a River, by Emil Ludwig; translated by Mary H. Lindsay. New York: Viking Press. $5.00.

HERR LUDWIG, Europe's most successful author in good selling biographies, has covered many personalities from Jesus Christ to Masaryk, with a hodge-podge of information, psychological trivialities and pseudo-poetical hokum. At last Herr Ludwig has succeeded in finding a new field for a successful historical writing business. He discovered that also "the life-story" of a river might be told. No doubt Herr Ludwig opens with this idea a new mode of popular information. We shall soon read the stories of the Rhine, the Danube, the Volga, the Mississippi, the St. Lawrence, the Amazon, the Ganges, the Yangtze. . . . Let us only hope that those books may be written in a more condensed and precise way than this talkative book on the Nile. With a river of 2,000 miles' length and a history of 6,000 years—the greatest theme a "biographer" has ever attempted—it is easy for the wordy author to fill 600 pages, a $5.00 book.

According to the headings one might expect a learned book of science, but as a matter of fact it is thoroughly belles-lettres. It offers neither complete information as to the Nile valley's geographical problems nor a reliable history of the four Nile countries, but just a light reading

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Readers who enjoy such a potpourri of topics will find this book rather entertaining. There are no dry statistics or abstract discussions, and the many colorful details and dramatically told happenings the average reader may find "interesting like fiction." For an impressive climax or a *bon mot* Herr Ludwig has ever been willing to sacrifice historical pedantry. The way he tells the story of Cleopatra may even delight the readers of love pulp magazines.

I doubt whether "The Nile" will become as popular as Herr Ludwig's quackeries on Christ and Bismarck; but, no doubt, honeymooners to Egypt and passengers on Mediterranean cruises will enjoy it.

MAX FISCHER.

A Nebraskan Novel

Mortgage Your Heart, by Sophus Keith Winther. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

IN HIS second novel Mr. Winther carries on with his Danish characters in a Nebraskan scene. His period is from about 1900 to 1917, and the persons are an immigrant Danish couple, their sons, and their neighbors and friends. Peter Grimsen came to America for "liberty and freedom," and being a land-hungry peasant at heart he became a rent-farmer. It was his only means of reaching his green-gold prize, and at best a hard means. In part this book is a record of his struggles to become an independent landowner and to assure himself and his family that place of regard which he coveted in American life, the bit of it at least that he knew. His wife and his sons bear a heavy part in these struggles, so heavy a part indeed that Meta his wife does not seem to overstate her conclusions when she says, in the message which gives this book its name, "Mortgage your heart, that's what you do in Nebraska." By 1917, when the story is suspended rather than ended, Peter and Meta have won success in acquiring land and seeing their sons take hold in the country; but their pleasure is alloyed with disappointment, for their sons have grown into a kind of life to which the old folk remain alien: their sons have won the other half of the success they coveted, and are not "foreigners."

I think that Mr. Winther's book is interesting mainly as a little chapter in the social history of Nebraska: as a novel it is unimpressive. The reasons for this are technical in part: Mr. Winther has selected material for treatment in episodes without imposing upon the episodes a very cogent pattern. One is curiously unaffected by what has happened, once the account is closed and one has begun another incident. Vital and acutely realized persons in such a story could, of course, carry one's interest and even raise it to the kindling-point of a warm liking; but Mr. Winther's characters rarely achieve a life of their own. They are incredibly handicapped, moreover, by an armor of "explanation" or commentary which Mr. Winther bolts upon them. They are forced to illustrate, though

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not without a protest from one of them, Mr. Winther's social philosophy: "As he slept away the first bitter shock of that scene which for the moment had become the world for him, a deep conviction about life was being fixed in his mind, a conviction that would one day make him realize that from the snake pit in a side-show to industrial slavery, it is not man, but what man has accepted from the order of society that makes life a sickness and the world a shambles." In that passage I read the promise of a third volume yet to come. That it be less of a tractate and more of a tale is a debt which Mr. Winther clearly owes to the mortgaged Grimsens.

ANDREW CORRY.

Papal Authority

The Papacy and World Affairs, by Carl Conrad Eckhardt. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. $4.00.

THE MEDIEVAL conception of papal authority is still difficult to define, but it undoubtedly grew out of a belief, partly realized in practise, that a "Christian totalitarianism" could be established. Professor Eckhardt accepts this theory as a starting-point and then proceeds to show in detail how secularistic resistance to it developed after the fourteenth century and ultimately triumphed. Most of his book is properly concerned with the period leading up to and immediately following the Thirty Years' War. It seems a quite objective analysis, and is written succinctly and effectively. Of particular value, it seems to me, are three chapters dealing with the controversial literature which followed the acknowledgement of secularization as a *fait accompli* by the Treaty of Westphalia. Hardly anything of great importance has been added to the argument since that time, though the modern student does have the advantage of historical perspective.

Throughout this section, the author's own judgments are expressed with restraint and a sense of responsibility. He does not permit himself to say that the age of Urban VIII and Innocent X demanded a really great Pontiff—a point with which few will now differ. On the other hand, there are a few statements to which one might take exception. Thus, for instance, not many would now assert that Saint Augustine's "City of God" makes a case for theocratic government. It was merely an endeavor to differentiate between the "Kingdom of God" and the "Kingdom of this world." That it was otherwise understood at one time is another matter. A student could also point to some bibliographical lacunae—e. g., Rivière's excellent studies of various papal bulls.

The summary of more recent papal history is too cursory and sketchy to merit a place in this otherwise first-rate book. Professor Eckhardt here draws too exclusively upon English and American comment. As a result he misses the central importance of the Concordat as a modern Vatican instrument. But he does sense the excellence of Benedict XV's policy, so that one could wish he might some day write a history of that reign as it badly needs to be written. There are few in America who could manage it so effectively.

AMBROSE FARLEY.

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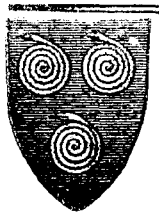
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More about Erin

The Irish Book, by Ronald MacDonald Douglas. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

ONLY a Scot could have squeezed such a wealth of lore and literature into the confines of so small a book. There are tantalizing bits of prose and poetry, the rudiments of the Gaelic language, notes on Irish saints and heroes, all manner of folk-lore and a remarkable lot of odd or pertinent data on Irish history, geography and character. For those who are able there are a dozen selections all in Gaelic. The author feels keenly the injustices Ireland has suffered and says, "The Catholic majority is wearing its new freedom with a kindly dignity and tolerance that is, in view of all that happened in the past, almost beyond understanding. I have seen more religious intolerance in one week in one city in Scotland than I saw in all my four or five years in Saorstat Eirann (the Irish Free State)." Mr. Douglas rambles a good deal, and occasionally, as when he treats of Irish humor, fails to communicate his enthusiasm. But on one could dip into this volume without wanting to know more of Ireland.

Handy Companion

An Atlas of Empire, by J. F. Horrabin. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $1.50.

THIS is the third tabloid atlas of Mr. Horrabin's series, and is certainly an attractive little book. As with its predecessors, "Of Current Affairs," and "Of European History," its proper use is not altogether clear. It is very well designed for intellectual boondoggling, being attractive looking and briefly factual and not going into complicated discussions on imperialism. As a reference book for the geography of empire for use while reading the news it is also all right.

Under the Great King

Humming-Bird, by Eleanor Farjeon. New York: Frederick A. Stokes. $2.50.

AN OLD woman's hazy recollections of a childhood visit gracefully intertwine with more graphic anecdotes of the far from idyllic court of Louis XIV. Watteau, the painter, is the most successfully drawn character.

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